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THE
VIRGIN OF THE SUN,
A PLAY
IN FIVE ACTS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

KOTZEBUE,

AUTHOR OF THE STRANGER, LOVER'S VOWS, &c. &c.

BY

JAMES LAWRENCE, *Esq.*

AUTHOR OF THE BOSOM FRIEND, &c.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, NEW BOND STREET,

1799.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ATALIBA, *King of Quito.*

HIGH-PRIEST *of the Sun.*

XAIRA, *Priest of the Sun.*

TELASKO, *an old man of the family of the Inca.*

ZORAI, *his son.*

ROLLA, *late commander of the army, and of the Inca
family.*

DON. ALONZO MOLINA.

DON. JUAN VALASQUES.

DIEGO, *Alonzo's shieldbearer.*

CHAMBERLAIN. .

HIGH-PRIESTESS *of the Sun.*

CORA, *daughter of Telasko.*

IDALI.

AMAZILI.

} *Virgins of the Sun.*

Priests, Virgins of the Sun, Courtiers, Soldiers, &c.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE
VIRGIN OF THE SUN.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Wilderness: through the thicket is discovered in the back ground a wall in a ruinous state, and beyond it, at a distance, the Dome of the Temple of the Sun. In the fore ground, on the right hand, a Cave, and on the left, a small hill shows its summit above the trees.*

TIME,—Evening,—Dusk.

ROLLA and the HIGH-PRIEST advance by a winding path through the bushes.

HIGH-PRIEST.

SUCH is the path then to Rolla's habitation—as wild and inaccessible, as the avenues to Rolla's heart!

ROLLA.

Pity me,—my friend,—Oh! pity me, and leave me! could you but understand—but comprehend—

HIGH-PRIEST.

To me you are no riddle,—but by understanding you, you mean paying homage to your idol;—by comprehending you, flattering your passion.—

ROLLA.

Alas! as if I were the only being of my species, a drop with which no other drop dare mix itself;—a voice for which nature is too poor to yield an echo,—I, I alone, am doomed to solitude!—less favoured than the worm that

B

crawls

crawls upon that leaf;—for see! another worm crawls forth to meet it.—Since then ye Gods! it is your rigorous will, that I amid the myriads you have created should stand alone, (*with a frown on the High-Priest*) begone, ye mortals! leave me to my fate.

HIGH PRIEST.

Oh Rolla! Rolla! I am old and feeble—look upon me—reverence my grey hairs.—If thy heart languishes for the consolations of sympathy and affection, find them in this heart—on this bosom! Rolla, I love thee as a father.—

ROLLA.

Then, as a father respect the peace of your son,—allow him to follow his own inclinations.—In this cave I am happier than thousands in gorgeous Palaces. It shall be my grave!—Then, my father, promise me one thing.—In some dark melancholy hour lead Cora hither.—Let her behold Rolla's remains, the spot where he breathed out his love sick life, on the cold damp ground.—Should a smile sit upon his lips, bid her remark it, it will show that he expired pronouncing her fatal name, and blessing her.—Perhaps then, afflicted at the sight, Cora, may hang over my body, and let fall a flower, or, Oh delightful thought!—perhaps a tear.—And this tear—Ah! it will wake me from the dead.—

HIGH-PRIEST.

Enthusiast!—

ROLLA.

I am as nature formed me.—My soul was made only for mighty passions.—Even when a boy, I never delighted in a swarm of play-fellows,—while busy as ants they buzzed around me.—Tis' true I played with them, but it gave me no pleasure, Tho' I knew not why.—But when the towering clouds darkened the horizon, when at midnight our mountains vomited fire, when a subterraneous groan announced the Earthquake—Oh! then my heart felt enlarged, expanded, my soul seemed to relish its new food,—the drooping plant revived.—

As

As I advanced towards manhood, no snowy bosom could detain my eye;—blind to every beauty of nature, I fixed my eagle-glance on the sun of honor.—My heart, my glowing heart panted for glory and for achievements.—Every victory I gained was a mere drop that fed the consuming flame, and made it blaze the brighter.——Ah! but then I saw Cora!

HIGH PRIEST.

Saw her!—And that sight extinguished the flame, whose bright blaze promised an eternal lustre.—Extinguished it, as a boy blows out a lamp.

ROLLA.

By no means.—The flame continued, tho' fed on other fuel.—The wild blazing flame became a mild genial fire.—Ambition gave place to love.

HIGH-PRIEST.

A mild genial fire! fine founding words! who has this fire warmed or comforted?

ROLLA.

(*with indifference*) I feel the reproach of this question.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Can you feel it—and is not your cheek suffused with blushes?—Young man endowed with a noble activity, perhaps for the benefit of half a world, you confine the influence of these powers—to a cave.—An Inca, a descendant of the Sun, an hereditary pillar of the state, you hide yourself—in a cave. A warrior, placed by your country at the head of its armies, (your country which in return for the noble confidence it has reposed in you, expects your utmost exertions) you bury yourself in a cave.

ROLLA.

Must your reproaches make me a boaster?—Have I not in wounds and victories, both as an Inca and as a warrior cancelled the obligation? were not my debts sufficiently repaid on that hot day, when shaken by Huascar's might, the throne of

Ataliba trembled to its foundations, and Rolla's sword fattened with hostile blood, the plains of Tumibamba?—Have you forgot the events of that day?—One arrow pierced my left arm,—a second my breast.—A sword cleaved my cheek;—a club stunned my brain.—Here, look;—here! here! and here, are the scars;—(*pointing to them*) and yet I maintained my ground.—Have I not paid my debts?

HIGH-PRIEST.

(*With emotion*) Brave youth!—but the gratitude of your country,—the friendship of your king,—the love and exultation of your army,—were these no recompense to your heart?

ROLLA,—(*sighing.*)

They were.

HIGH-PRIEST.

And have they ceased to be so?

ROLLA.

They have!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Oh! then, accursed be this worthless love, which thus extirpates every seed of virtue!

ROLLA.

Be not so hasty in your conclusions—love, as well as ambition is a spur to glorious deeds:—but I,—for whom should I fight?—who would rejoice in my victory?—Cora loves me not:—(*with emotion*) and I have no father, no mother,—no brother, nor sister;—I am alone in the universe!

HIGH-PRIEST.

(*Folding him in his arms*) My son! my son!

ROLLA.

{ Leave me, my father! Oh leave me! I cannot return your affection.—You with your grey locks, in your priestly habit, so reverend and so venerable—You can never be the confidant of my heart.—Your dignity destroys all confidence.—Ah! that I had a mother.—The Gods created women to soften and alleviate our sufferings—If it was denied me to share my sorrows

sorrows with the object of my affections, I yet might pour them into a maternal bosom.—But I have no beloved—no mother!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Then have recourse to the Gods!

ROLLA.

The Gods abhor me, because I have fixed my affections on a virgin devoted to their service:—because I love this woman more than the Gods.—At the rising of the Sun, or at the sight of Cora, my senses are equally affected.—Not so my heart. Cora affects my heart the most.

HIGH-PRIEST.

May the Gods pardon your enthusiasm.—Rolla, it is too common among mortals, to desire those advantages with most ardour, whose possession is withheld from them by the strongest obstacles.—Impossibility guards this treasure,—it is this which enhances its value.—Cora, as a woman would lightly have affected your passions.—but Cora, the Virgin of the Sun, you love—you adore!

ROLLA.

(With rage) What!—(he restrains himself, casts a look of contempt on the High-Priest.) Good night! good night!—(retreating towards his cave).

HIGH-PRIEST.

Wherefore this impatience? may not I,—may not your friend venture to upbraid you?—live according to your fancy.—Avoid if it pleases you, all mankind. But only quit this wilderness, which must present images as ghastly to the mind, as these brambles to the sight.—Come home with me.—You know the wing of my palace, which looks on the sea-shore. There even amid crowds, you may live in solitude,—no busy intruder shall disturb your darling visions;—even against me, you may shut your door;—mine shall ever stand open to you.

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

Thanks, my friend, many thanks for your good intentions.—I know the apartments, and the calm peaceable prospect they enjoy:—but Rolla lives and dies within this cave.—Yonder, where the proud dome of the Temple rises beyond the high trees, yonder dwells my Cora:—and Rolla lives and dies within this cave.—Good night!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Obstinacy!—At any rate on to-morrow's solemnity forget not your duty.—The grand festival of the sun requires your presence at Court, and in the Temple.

ROLLA.

You must make my excuses.—Tell the king any thing,—say I am dead.—I shall never appear again among men.—To the Gods however I will sacrifice,—and to the Gods it matters not, whether within a temple or a cave! good night.

(Exit Rolla to his cave).

HIGH-PRIEST. *(alone)*

Oh young man! young man! little can you conceive how deeply I am interested in your welfare!—See the setting sun glitters upon the golden dome of the Temple!—but in this thicket it is already night.—I shall scarcely be able to find the winding path that leads from the wilderness.

(As the High-Priest is going, he runs against Diego, who enters feeling his way, through the bushes, and starts violently at the sight of the High-Priest).

HIGH-PRIEST.

Whence are you come, and whither going?

DIEGO.

Whither?—I am taking a walk.

HIGH-PRIEST.

What! walking for pleasure in a wilderness?

DIEGO.

(With impudent stupidity) Yes.

HIGH-PRIEST.

HIGH-PRIEST.

You are probably in a wrong path.

DIEGO.

It seems so—as I find myself in yours.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Are you not Alonzo's Shield-bearer?

DIEGO.

You are not far from the mark.

HIGH-PRIEST.

If you are a stranger to this place, you will only lose yourself deeper in the wood.—Follow me—I will put you in the right way.

DIEGO.

And who then dares to say I am in the wrong way?—I'd have your Heathen Holiness to know, that in Castile, and Arragon,—Granada and Murcia, and all the different kingdoms of my King, no mother's son surpasses the honest Diego in faith or valor.

HIGH-PRIEST.

(*Smiling*) I am inclined to believe it;—particularly as I have your word for it.

DIEGO.

Which you have extorted from my modesty.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Pardon me;—and explain only to me one difficulty,—how I can find you at night in a wilderness, and nevertheless in the right way.—Are you alone? Is your master near?—What are you doing?—for that you are merely taking a walk, you will never persuade me.

DIEGO.

(*Confused*) Why then, since you are so inquisitive, I must confess I am in love.

HIGH-PRIEST.

(*Smiling*) In love!

DIEGO.

DIEGO.

(*Spouting*) Oh yes, — I love, and with no common love :
 I love with jealousy, with desperation ;
 Love drives me often to the pinnacle,
 Of yonder cloud-capt mountain, and anon,
 Plunges me head-long in the roaring Ocean.
 Even now, love sends me here to tell a tale,
 And hold a council with the cooing doves,
 And make the virtuous moon my confidant.

HIGH-PRIEST.

It seems the Gods have destined this wood, to be the shelter
 of half-witted Lovers.

DIEGO. (*singing*)

To the winds, to the waves, to the woods I complain,
 Ah well-a-day my poor heart !

HIGH-PRIEST.

You are a simpleton.

(*Exit*)DIEGO. (*alone*)

A simpleton ! — so much the worse for you ; — a simpleton
 has outwitted the High-Priest of the Sun. — Wit for ever !
 — I see it is a current coin, in the new as well as in the old
 world. — Is the coast clear ? — (*looking about him cautiously*)
 St ! — St ! —

(*Enter Don Alonzo, and Don Juan, wrapt in a mantle*)

JUAN.

Are we safe Diego ?

DIEGO.

As safe as people can be, who at night-time in the open
 air, and in a wilderness, are about a rascally plot. — By St.
 Barnaby, I believe we are as safe as a drunkard, who would
 dance across the river Amazon on a slack rope.

JUAN.

What ! have you seen any thing ?

DIEGO.

I never see at all in the dark ; — but I have heard —

ALONZO,

ALONZO.

(With anxiety) What have you heard?

DIEGO.

The identical voice of the High-Priest. —

ALONZO.

The High-Priest! what could he want here?

DIEGO.

Only to put me in the right way. — 'Tis the same thing in all countries; — The Priests always know the right way. —

ALONZO.

But what could bring him to this wilderness? Velasques! speak. —

JUAN.

Speak? to what purpose? — With my sword drawn, and my eyes shut, I rush among the thickest crowd. — Such is my maxim in every danger. — Courage is wasted by words, as the scanty soil is washed away by a torrent of rain from the naked rock. — No hazardous deed can ever after take root there. — Yes, — if I were fond of talking, I have enough to say. —

ALONZO.

What then? —

DIEGO.

Oh! speak, Sir, I beg you. — When it is dark, I love to hear people talk. —

JUAN.

Well then, if it is only to dissipate your Ennui till your star arises: — for Lovers at an assignation, are desperately impatient: — well then, I will speak till you bid me cease, and my text shall be, we are in a sad scrape: — believe me, in a devilish scrape. —

DIEGO.

He's right. —

C

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

This is a new language in the mouth of Don Juan Velasques, who never turned his back to danger.

JUAN.

I expected this reproof. — Hear me friend! could you doubt my courage, I would throttle the first Rattle-Snake that passed, to prove it to you. — You know my principles. — I value my life less than one happy moment, — and every moment is happy which I consecrate to friendship. — Therefore, if you love me, touch not that string, — my arm and sword belong to you. — I follow you blindly in the dark; but allow me, while I follow you, to think that it is a folly to be groping our way here about, while we might employ ourselves better. —

ALONZO.

Better? — How?

JUAN.

He, who employs himself badly, could always employ himself better, and by all the Knights, whose blood flows in my veins, — or in any other veins; we are about a rascally affair. I mention not the sword which hangs by a hair over our heads. — Love is worth more than life. — You love Cora, I love you, and Diego loves us both —

DIEGO.

Yes — yes — but by your leave, life is worth more than love.

JUAN.

Suppose then, it should shorten our life a year or two; he who has lived merrily, has lived long. —

DIEGO.

Confounded principles!

JUAN.

But Alonzo, — to live merrily, we must possess that health of the soul, which is inseparable from honesty and virtue. Lay your hand upon your heart, and say, how you feel in
your

your solitary moments. Don Alonzo Molina, left the ruffian band of Pizzaro, because he detested their barbarities, because he loved every Indian as a brother. — That indeed was noble! I will go, said he, the friend and instructor of this interesting people; — I will form their minds, will teach the useful arts, will become their benefactor. That was very noble! — you departed; — The King of the country opened his arms and heart to you; — the people loved you; — the family of the Incas honored you, — the Grandees without envy, saw you become the favourite of their Prince; You partook his cares, but also his joys and treasures. — You ceased to be a stranger, and without murmuring, the Priests saw you appear at their religious ceremonies. — What was the consequence? — on one of their festivals, my noble friend Alonzo, beheld a Virgin of the Sun, as she presented to the King the consecrated bread. She is young and beautiful; — Alonzo is inflamed, — all his mighty projects are knocked on the head, and sail down the stream of oblivion. The glorious device on his shield, the hands folded under a cross surrounded by Sun beams, give place to a burning heart pierced by the darts of love. — Should I wish to speak with Alonzo, where must I seek him? Among the Counsellors of the King? — among the judges of the people! among the instructors of their youth? — Why formerly I might have found him there, — but now! — he steals at midnight round behind these walls, shrouds his head in his mantle, and deals as rudely with his late grand projects as the mischievous boy, that destroys the eggs in a bird's nest. —

ALONZO, (*irritated.*)

Velasques! —

JUAN.

Fie! this tone, this threatening mein, are very out of season. — But your conscience is galled, and cannot bear the least touch. You wonder at this grave sermon, from the merry Velasques: — but mind this, — Velasques is always merry, always in good spirits,

spirits, because he is an honest man. — But let me continue my sermon. I am for once in a preaching humour. — You, who respected every little popular superstition, because on the least of them, perhaps the peace of mind of some weak fellow-creature is built, at once you violate the holiest law of a nation, which received you with generous confidence into its very bosom. — You seduce a virgin consecrated to the service of their Gods. — Rebellious nature conspired with you, — an earthquake battered down these impenetrable walls to open your sacriligious path to Cora's arms; — and amid this elementary war, you destroyed her innocence!

ALONZO.

You are unmerciful. — Believe me, my conscience does not slumber. —

JUAN.

Then it is deaf — and I must speak to it in thunder; — must repeat to you, that Ataliba is your benefactor, this generous nation has received you as a brother — and *you*! — you like a mean assassin, plunge your dagger in its back. —

ALONZO.

Enough, Velasques! — I acknowledge the voice of a friend — I thank you. — What can you require of me?

JUAN.

Now God be thanked! — at length your eyes are opened, I require of you, to renounce this criminal, this dangerous connexion. —

ALONZO.

I will speak of it to Cora. —

JUAN.

Charming! — Cora to be sure is a competent judge in this case. — (*ironically*) now I am convinced you are in earnest. —

ALONZO.

Indeed I am. — I will represent to her every anxiety, every fear that love suggests to me. — The anger of the King, — the rage of the people, — my danger. —

JUAN

JUAN.

Your danger! — Excuse me my friend, that's perfectly out of the question. — Your danger compared with *her's*, is a down-feather to a bar of gold. — *You* risk only your life. —

DIEGO.

Zounds! Is not that enough to risk?

JUAN.

She on the contrary, risks her honor, her peace of mind; — the benediction of her father, the love of her family, her hopes of Heaven. — and then, — what a horrible lingering death awaits her, should you have given birth to a being, who may betray your love. —

ALONZO.

Oh no! no! — that is not the case. —

JUAN.

Thank God if it be not! — but who can answer that it never will be? — And then, — what boundless misery are you storing up for her, and for yourself! — She must die! — Oh! that were little: — but what a death! buried alive in a subterraneous vault, whose opening is for ever closed upon her; by a dim lamp she sits, — one solitary loaf lies by her — and see! she pants, she gasps for breath. — Horror! my blood runs cold! I have met death in a thousand forms: — but with such an aspect I could not face it. —

ALONZO, (*embracing bim.*)

I will never see her again!

JUAN.

Well said! — That's right. — Let us hasten away. —

(*attempts to draw bim away with bim*)

ALONZO.

Only to take leave of her. —

JUAN.

Write her a letter. — We can fling it over the wall. Do you still hesitate? — Ah! *now* I perceive how firm your resolution was! — already me thinks I see the poor Cora, in that
abominable

abominable vault:—her soul and body equally tortured. Oh horrible! She gnaws the flesh from her emaciated arm,—and exhausted by frenzy and by blasphemies, that spirit departs, which but for you, had returned pure and unsullied to its creator.—When she shall stand before His throne who shall judge the Peruvians as well as the Spaniards,—when she shall accuse you as the cause of her horrible crime,—of the murder of her child.—

ALONZO, (*suddenly drawing him off.*)

For God's sake let us be gone!

JUAN.

With all my heart.—

(*As all three are going, Cora is heard clapping her hands behind the wall.—*)

ALONZO, (*breaking suddenly from Juan.*)

Ah Valasques!—that is the signal! my Cora! my Cora!—

He flies from Juan,—and climbs over the wall. (*Exit.*)

JUAN.

(*Follows Alonzo, with his eyes, with marks of great discontent.*)

DIEGO, (*after a pause.*)

So much for the right reverend Don Juan de Velasques and his sermon!—Such a one as is not heard every day from the pulpits of Salamanca.—And a pair of little heathen hands only go pat! pat! pat!—and the tempter overturns all the effects of his arguments in an instant.—

JUAN, (*with bitterness.*)

Farewell my good friend!—I wash my hands of the business.—Confound your combustible character! where others are warm, *you* burn; where others walk leisurely, *you* fly.—Well! however the affair may end, Friendship has done its duty.—Should the worst come to the worst, I can but share his fate.—Till then,—let's be merry.—Diego, how are you?

DIEGO.

Like a fish out of water.—

JUAN.

JUAN. —
No such thing. — Where mad schemes are in hand, a fool is
always in his element. —

DIEGO. —

Were I in a certain person's place —

JUAN. —

What would you do!

DIEGO. —

First, I would hold a sermon of the same kind as your's,
and if that had no effect, I would say, my dear friend Alon-
zo, — or, Don Alonzo, — you cannot expect that I should sub-
mit to be roasted alive for your sake. — Farewell! I return to
Spain, and take our honest Diego with me. We will there
pray a rosary for you —

JUAN. —

Why cannot we do it here? —

DIEGO. —

Here! — what in an heathen country? — near the temple of
an idol. —

JUAN. —

Blockhead! our God is every where! but acts of friend-
ship are more acceptable in his sight than rosaries; — and
therefore I will not at present tell my beads. — I am here as
the guardian of my misguided friend. —

DIEGO. —

Indeed! — and what am I then? —

JUAN. —

His shield-bearer. —

DIEGO. —

Well then! — my services here are perfectly superfluous.

JUAN. —

'Tis your business to obey. — Come, fellow, take this whistle,
and creep round the walls of the temple, on the left side, —
I will do the same on the right. We shall meet half way,

— should

—should any thing raise your suspicions, you must whistle.
—Here, take this whistle.—

DIEGO, (*takes the whistle trembling.*)

Left about?—

JUAN.

Left about!—

DIEGO.

All alone?—

JUAN.

Yes, all alone.—

DIEGO.

I shall lose myself in the wilderness.

JUAN.

Blockhead! — cannot you see the wall, and the dome of the Temple—?

DIEGO.

Do you think I have the eyes of an owl?

JUAN.

Is it not moon-light?

DIEGO.

No!—

JUAN.

No? Ha! I perceive where your courage lies.

DIEGO.

I know where it would wish to lie;—for to tell you the truth, my courage generally goes to bed at sun-set.—

JUAN.

Signior Diego, we will keep it awake with fisticuffs.—
(*advancing with a threatening air.*)

DIEGO.

No need of that, Sir,—it is wide awake—(*retreating.*)

JUAN.

Away then, you fool!—(*JUAN pushes DIEGO off the stage on one side, and retires himself on the other.*—)

Enter

Enter ALONZO and CORA.

(ALONZO springs over the wall, and afterwards assists her to climb over.)—

ALONZO.

Only a little spring, my dear Cora, cast yourself boldly into my arms. (*Leads her forward.*) The calm tranquility of this scene was formed for love; and friendship guards it.—This spot is not so extensive, so barren, so destitute of shade as your dismal garden, where the tell-tale moon intrudes on every side, and doubles every form.—(*Pressing her to his bosom*) At last I possess thee again!

CORA, (*returning his embrace.*)

At last again!—

ALONZO.

Ah! these were three eternal weeks.

CORA.

Only three weeks, Alonzo?

ALONZO.

To love, they seemed like months.

CORA.

To my heart, they were years!

ALONZO.

Every evening poor Alonzo, appeared with the twilight, and waited for the signal, and listened, if at last Cora would not call him to the pleasures of a blessed night—

CORA.

Every evening that I could not come, I pined in tears.

ALONZO.

You have not been ill?

CORA.

I am always ill, when separated from you.

ALONZO.

Tell me what hindered you,—you know you promised much sooner.—

D

CORA.

CORA.

I was wrong to promise any thing: I could only hope, but Love hopes every thing it wishes: could it but realize all its hopes!—My turn comes but seldom to perform the nightly service in the Temple; but I depended too much upon the indisposition of one of my sisters, whose place I intended to have taken. She recovered, and thanked me for my good intentions.—Poor Cora was so sad; her sleepless nights appeared so long!

ALONZO.

Sleep never sealed my eyes. The morning found me under these trees, my cloaths still damp with the dews of the evening, —my whole frame still quivering from the midnight cold. —See! under yon palm tree I stood, night after night, and looked towards your Temple.—At times I saw yonder, where the eternal lamp sparkles, the shadow of a form walking backwards and forwards.—I always fancied it was you.—

CORA.

The poor solitary Cora no shadow could deceive: but every where your form pursued me. With hasty and unequal steps I traversed the Temple, nor peace or ease could I find in any retreat. Oh! tell me is this ever the case? does that heart always tremble with anxiety, on which the image of man is impressed? formerly I was mild and gentle—I could bear without anger or impatience, the disappointment of my trifling wishes. If a sudden shower deprived me of an expected walk,—or a gust of wind broke down a flower which my care had reared.—But it is no longer so, I am become a different creature. When I now sit at my work, either spinning or weaving, if but a thread breaks, I become so angry, so impatient, that I am quite startled at myself.—(*fondly*) Tell me, Alonzo, is a character improved or spoil'd by love.

ALONZO.

Improved by true love.

CORA.

CORA.

Oh! no, no! my heart is the seat of true love! but I am spoiled, not improved by it.

ALONZO.

Far from it.—Your blood only flows a little quicker.

CORA.

Or perhaps it is because I am sick—for, my dear Alonzo, I am now often sick.

ALONZO.

Are you serious?

CORA.

Serious! I am often very sick, but that is very natural, for soon you will be no longer the only object of my affection.

ALONZO, (*astonished.*)

No longer the only object of your affection!

CORA, (*smiling.*)

Yes, no longer you only!

ALONZO.

Your words either contain a riddle, or a crime.—Cora, love, though all comprehensive cannot be divided.—Another besides myself? (*looking her full in the face*) impossible: and still your looks are so tranquil.

CORA.

Tranquil, why not? what I feel is sweet: can it then be criminal?—An unaccountable, but delicious melancholy pervades my whole heart.—Oh the last festival of infancy! as I was decorating the porch with flowers, I saw a young woman softly slumbering on the steps of the Temple; On her breast lay a little smiling cherub. Oh! my heart beat with such warmth, such affection; involuntarily I stretched forth my arms towards the child, I wished to take it gently from the mother, and press it to my own bosom; but what is softer than the slumber of a tender mother? For I scarce had touched the child, than she started up, pressed

her treasure to her heart, and look'd at me with the eyes of distrust.—Alonzo, is not a mother a respectable being?

ALONZO, (*astonished.*)

What has inspired you with the thought?

CORA.

And yet can you not understand me? (*with an expression of the most innocent joy.*) soon, soon, shall I be a mother.

ALONZO, (*petrified with fear.*)

Oh God!

CORA.

What has happened to you? be not alarmed. I love you as much as ever: hear me; once I imagined it was impossible I could love you with more ardour, and I was not mistaken, since I saw in you, Alonzo, the handsomest of your sex: Meanwhile, like a forcerer, you stole under a new form into my heart, and I love you now as the father of my child.

ALONZO.

Cora! Cora! my blood is congealed with horror! and you are so tranquil.

CORA.

Of what are you afraid? Is it a crime to become a mother? Impossible! My aged father always taught me; He who has committed a crime feels restless and uneasy,—but I,—I feel so content—so happy!

ALONZO.

Is it possible you can be ignorant of the duties of your station?—The sacred laws you bound yourself to observe, when that image of the Sun was fastened on your robe?

CORA.

The laws of our Temple.—

ALONZO.

And what are they?

CORA.

I know not; my father says, he who loves virtue, needs no law, he fulfils every duty without knowing it: and I love virtue.—

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Virtue! you know not what it is! There is a wide difference, between virtue founded on the eternal laws of nature, and that counterfeit, which some visionary has chosen to dignify with its name.—(*embraces her with a wild air*) Cora! what have we done?—In every station, love and joy are the recompense of the pains of child birth;—In yours alone,—death!

CORA, (*terrified.*)

Death!

ALONZO.

And I,—I am your murderer!

CORA.

(*Tranquilly*) How you love to torment yourself! strange man! who will kill me?—And for what am I to suffer?

ALONZO.

You have—in the language of your Priests—you have offended the Gods!

CORA.

What I? no indeed, I love the Gods!

ALONZO.

That may be, Cora; nevertheless, you will be the victim of an antient superstition;—flight alone can save us,—but flight—God! into what foreign country shall we fly?

CORA.

How your anxiety blinds you! A thought strikes me, to tranquillize you.

ALONZO.

God himself then, must have inspired you with it!

CORA.

The method is sure and easy.—The approaching morning shall decide, whether I am deceived by my own feelings, or whether the Gods frown upon me.—Hitherto, the Moon and Stars alone, have beheld our clandestine intercourse: to-morrow, the greatest of all Gods, the Sun himself, shall be the witness

witness of our affection.—It is still night.—I dare not tarry longer: I must away to the Temple; to the service of the eternal lamps. You, Alonzo, remain here, and repose yourself under these trees. Soon as the dawn shall tint the eastern horizon, I will return to you, and we will ascend that mount together.—Then with our faces turned towards the East, arm locked in arm,—lip glued to lip,—let us boldly await the rising of the Sun.—Do you understand me?

ALONZO.

But imperfectly.—

CORA.

What! Do you not comprehend me? If Cora has transgressed, the Sun will hide himself in clouds, or the first ray that falls upon her, will annihilate the traitress. But if—Oh Alonzo!—if he, my Father, and my God, should rise in unclouded majesty, should smile on our embraces, and breathe joy and tranquility into our hearts;—*then* may you lay aside every fear, dearest Alonzo! no hair of Cora's head shall perish.—We stand acquitted in the sight of the Sun:—in whose presence then should Cora tremble?

ALONZO.

Good girl! affecting simplicity!—

CORA.

And what's still more—to-morrow is the grand Festival of the Sun! to-morrow unveiled, in all his majesty he ascends the horizon, and his unclouded appearance is a joyful sign, that the Gods are gracious to the country.—Look up, my Alonzo, towards Heaven.—See how the stars sparkle! how bright and pure the blue on every side;—No passing cloud threatens, no fanning breeze is stirring.—Every thing announces a beautiful morning.—Embrace me.—Farewell!—Here, under this tree shall Cora find you sleeping, and wake the sweet slumberer with her kisses.

(*She hastens back over the wall*)

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

(Who lost in horror and despair, had scarce attended to the last words Cora had said.)

Poor innocent creature!—Oh God! What a wretch, what a villain am I!—Save her! save her! e'er the flame devours her.—Alas! it is too late,—I can only perish with her.—She is lost!—*(Covering his face with his hands, he leans with his head against a tree.)*

(Enter DON JUAN and DIEGO.)

Diego steals trembling forward from the right side of the stage; the moment he perceives Alonzo he starts, and whistles with all his might.

ALONZO, *(starting forward, and grasping his sword.)*
What's the matter?

JUAN, *(springing from the other side.)*

What's the matter?

DIEGO.

Oh! is it you? Don Alonzo.—Why did not you tell me directly that it was you?

JUAN, *(patting him on the shoulder.)*

Have a winged hare painted on your shield.

DIEGO.

Better than a blind lion. Did not you yourself order me to whistle, should any thing raise my suspicions?

JUAN.

Fool! How long then have you been suspicious of your master?

DIEGO.

Only look at him! Is not his appearance gloomy enough to raise suspicions? He looks like a Jew at an Auto di fé.
(Pointing to Alonzo, who has resumed his former posture.)

JUAN, *(taking Alonzo by the arm.)*

Poor friend! was the parting so affecting?

ALONZO, *(embracing him.)*

Ah, Velasques! your warning came too late!

JUAN

JUAN, (*keeping him off.*)

Avaunt!—what?—is she—

ALONZO.

She is a mother!—

JUAN, (*pushing him from him.*)

Then we are all in the high-road to heaven.

ALONZO, (*holding out his hand to him*)

Forfake me not, I conjure you! my friend! my brother!

JUAN, (*giving his hand to him.*)

Alonzo, it is not my way to cry out to the boy who has fallen into the water, that he ought not to have ventured near it;—I would rather exert myself to draw him out, if it were possible: but *here*, the devil take me if I see any possibility of extricating you. Had we a ship, or a magic cloak to carry us thro' the air, Velasques would not be the last to fly.—But here,—(*putting himself in a posture indicating firmness and resolution,*) he can only arm himself with fortitude and courage, and wrapping himself up to the very eyes in his mantle, patiently and resolutely await the storm.—

ALONZO, (*wringing his hands.*)

Is every hope then lost?—Is there no help?

JUAN.

Patience!—*He* cannot be destitute of every resource, who still retains his understanding. Let us go and refresh ourselves by food and rest, and to-morrow with renovated spirits and recruited forces, we will consult on this business.

DIEGO.

The very flower of chivalry!

ALONZO.

Stay!—At day-break she promised to return;—

JUAN.

Indeed? well said!—There is not a more troublesome office in the world, than that of confidant to one of these lovers; they are never pleased to recollect our human wants and necessities: it never occurs to them, that we need sleep.—

DIEGO.

DIEGO.

Or meat,—or drink.

ALONZO.

Forgive me!

JUAN.

Yes, yes! I forgive you,—but forget not the obligation: for, by Heaven! I had rather storm a fort extraordinary, than forego my nightly rest.—(*Spreading his mantle under a tree, and lying down on it*) I must make a virtue of necessity. Fatigue is the softest pillow.—Good night, Alonzo! he who possesses a good conscience, may sleep as sound upon a bed of leaves, as the seven sleepers did in their dark cave.—(*Closing his eyes.*)

DIEGO.

(*Preparing his couch in the same manner.*)—Oh! that there may be no rattle-snake near me!—That no tyger, as hungry as myself may smell me out!—Ha! a thought strikes me.—(*Produces a rosary and bangs it on the next tree.*) So! now I believe I am pretty safe.—(*lies down,*) Oh! if I could but contrive to sleep! it were a master-piece, for my head is full of thought, my heart full of fear!—and my stomach full of—emptiness.—(*sleeps,*)

ALONZO, (*looking down on the others, after a pause,—*)

Happy, enviable mortals!—

(*He leans pensively against a tree.*) (The curtain falls.)

ACT II.

ACT II.

(DON JUAN and DIEGO are discovered still sleeping. DON ALONZO, walking up and down under the trees.)

ALONZO.

A LONG, eternal night!—The stars still glitter bright in the firmament, and yet the Moon begins not, to pale, and fade away.—All is dark and silent around me.—Noise and tumult are a relief to the criminal,—they drown and overpower the voice of his conscience.—What said the fool Diego to me lately? “With the conscience it is, as with the stomach;—as soon as its existence is perceived, the health is no longer untainted.”—The fool spoke truth.—My beloved mother! thy golden precepts were to have conducted me to a better world:—Alas! not even into another hemisphere of *this*, have they accompanied me.—Perhaps, at this instant, kneeling before thy Creator, thou art imploring blessings on thy fallen son.—Pray for him! oh! pray for him!—He needs the intercessions of a saint.—Away with the melancholy thought!—Every hope has not yet forsaken me. Twilight beams upon the night,—and from twilight break the first rays of the Sun.—(*pointing towards the east,*) See *there*, the image of returning joy! Already a purple glow tints the east; and now the larger stars alone are visible.—Hark! at a distance, already I hear the first faint twitter of a new awakened bird. The moment approaches, which is to restore my Cora to me. As long as I hold *her* in my arms, conscience is deaf, and danger—but a trifle.—I will awake these sleepers, (*sbaking* Diego.) Diego! Diego! awake! it is already day.—

DIEGO.

DIEGO, (*rubbing his eyes.*)

What! you're joking. 'Tis quite dark.

ALONZO.

No such thing; the moon is gone down, the stars disappear.

DIEGO, (*yawning.*)

Look again, 'tis pitch dark. (*Rolls on his other side, mutters some unintelligible sounds, and sleeps again.*)

ALONZO.

The clumsy workmanship of that watch, (*pointing to Diego*) stands for want of sleep; hunger only can restore its motion. —Velasques, 'tis day-break. (*Shakes Don Juan.*)

JUAN.

Well, and what then;

ALONZO.

—Will you not enjoy the beautiful morning?

JUAN.

Go you, and make an ode to the morning, only let me sleep. (*Disposes himself to sleep again.*)

ALONZO.

Have you forgot that Cora is coming?

JUAN.

What's that to me? She is not coming to me.

ALONZO.

And to see that angel, is it not worth your while to open your eyes a few minutes sooner.

JUAN, (*falling asleep.*)

I will dream of her.

ALONZO.

There they lie and sleep in defiance of my restless humour, and, from a perfect state of inaction, recruit their spirits. Alas! I find that man is so much the more happy, in proportion as he approaches a state of brutish insensibility! happier,—although perhaps not in the eyes of the philosopher,

—but in his own;—and what more is required? (*Cora is heard clapping her hands behind the wall,—Alonzo entraptured.*) She comes! no 'tis false, what I have now uttered; one moment of such rapture to the heart, is worth more than ages in which the senses only revel.—*hastens to meet her.*)

Enter CORA, (springing into his arms.)

Here I am, my beloved!—but you have deprived Cora of a pleasure. I wished to have found you in your morning sleep, to have hid myself behind a tree, and have covered you with a shower of leaves;—to have called you lazy.—Do you hear me? or are you dreaming with your eyes open? With his arm round her neck, can Alonzo, with that fixed eye, think of any thing but his Cora?

ALONZO.

Sweet soul you wrong me! one Cora only reigns in my heart, as one Sun in Heaven.—but this night's discovery—my peace—my peace of mind is lost:—anxiety, conscience, what terrific images!—death in its most ghastly form, its cold hand stretch'd out, to tear Cora from my heart.—

CORA, (*putting her hand before his mouth.*)

Be silent,—and trust the Gods. Look up! look around thee! Oh! my heart is full of joy! observe how bright, how clear, how blue the sky! soon will the Sun arise; haste! haste with me to the hill. (*She runs hastily up the hill,—Alonzo follows.*) A moment more,—and we had arrived too late. Behold the golden glory that flames around Him? see! how the mountains and woods start out of the shade! look around thee! how grand! how sublime! See! how a thousand dew drops sparkle! Hark! how a thousand choristers chant forth His praise! Oh Alonzo!—my God is great!—my bosom swells with insupportable emotion.—Tears start into my eyes—delicious tears of hope and joy.—Rejoice thee! Oh! rejoice thee! my Alonzo! no cloud obscures the face of my God!—He frowns not!—(*she kneels*) Father! to whose service I have consecrated myself!

Father,

Father! whose image I bear on my breast, and in my heart! cast one of thy thousand eyes on me! be witness to my love for this youth! be thou my judge!—If what I feel be criminal, so let thy flaming brow be veiled in darkness! convene thy towering thunder clouds around thee! send down the exterminating flash, the minister of thy wrath and thy vengeance! (*with fervor.*) Grant me a sign, my father! a testimony of thy wrath or of thy love! (*after a pause.*) Oh! how mildly, how benignly he looks down upon me! how soft, how cheering is his ray! Now then,—we may venture,—now in the presence of my God,—come, Oh Alonzo! to my arms.—(*She embraces him.*) It is done!—I am tranquil!—He would have annihilated us in this embrace had it been criminal.—My heart overflows with gratitude and joy! kneel down! kneel down! let us offer up our praises and thanksgivings.—

ALONZO.

I kneel?—dear Cora, the Sun is not my God!

CORA.

Oh yes! He is thy God also. He shines upon us all.—He bestows on us all his cheering influence. Kneel down, I entreat you, by my side.

ALONZO, (*struggling.*)

Cora! dear Cora!

CORA.

Ungrateful Alonzo! who gave thee thy Cora?—In the very sight of my God shall I be ashamed of thee!—Dearest Alonzo! if thou lov'st me.—(*She kneels down, and draws him by the hand after her.*)

ALONZO.

Who can resist the sweet enthusiast? (*kneeling beside her.*)

CORA.

Speechless gratitude! the silent sacrifice of our hearts.—

ALONZO.

That, I can offer to Thee, God of all Gods.—(*both sunk in silent devotion.*)

Enter

Enter ROLLA from his Cave.

'Tis yet so early—scarce day-break,—the sun rises and sets, and finds me ever waking;—Patience! a time will come, when he shall beam upon my eternal slumbers. (*Perceives Don Juan and Diego.*) What is this? Two of the strangers who live among us? I lost their way without doubt; benighted in the wilderness. I'll wake them, and offer them refreshments; but first my morning prayer to thee, my Father!—

(*He turns to the east, and as he raises his hands and eyes to heaven, perceives the two lovers on the mount: an exclamation of surprise and horror escapes him: he remains petrified as if he had seen a spectre.*)

Cora and Alonzo rise slowly, still turned towards the Sun, and sink again in silent embraces.

ROLLA.

(*Overcome by grief and rage, and in a voice suffocated by his emotions.*

Cora!

(*The lovers start, and turning, perceive Rolla. Cora shrieks, and swoons on the side of the mount.—Alonzo hesitates a moment, whether he should attack Rolla, or assist Cora. At length conquered by love, he kneels at Cora's side, and endeavours to recover her. Rolla trembling in every limb, but without changing his place or posture, keeps his stern eye fixed on the lovers.*)

ALONZO, (*without leaving the motionless Cora.*)

To arms! Velasques! Diego, to arms!

JUAN, DIEGO, (*Starting up half asleep.*)

What's the matter?—What's the matter?

ALONZO.

Down with him!

JUAN, DIEGO.

Whom?—Where?

ALONZO.

ALONZO.
Down with him ere he escape!

JUAN, (at length perceiving Rolla.)

This single man?

DIEGO, (brandishing his sword.)

What, two against one?—I'm up to it.

ALONZO.

Down with him! we are betrayed.

JUAN, (sheathing his sword.)

This single unarmed man?

ALONZO, (abandoning the still motionless Cora, rushes down the mount, with his sword drawn, against Rolla, who nevertheless without changing his position, keeps his eye fixed on Cora.)

JUAN, (opposing him.)

Stop, friend!—or enemy:—if you advance a step further.

ALONZO.

For God's sake, Velasquez! are you mad?—Cora's life is at stake,—(struggling to disengage himself.)

JUAN, (rudely pushing him back.)

Bridle your fury, young man.—(advancing to Rolla.) Have I not seen that face? Are you not Rolla?

ROLLA, (endeavouring to recollect himself.)

I? Rolla?—so I am called.

JUAN.

The warrior Rolla!—Indeed it is so. (offering him his hand)
Well then, I hail in you, one of the noblest,—the bravest men in this country!

ROLLA.

How is it with me?—It is still very early—(rubbing his eyes) am I awake?—(looking steadfastly at Cora; and after a pause?)—No,—by the God's!—it is no dream.

JUAN.

It is no dream! though I read a severe sentence in your eyes;—though the truth may appear horrible and offensive in your sight.—You probably recognise that woman, on whose breast

breast glitters the image of your God.—She is a Virgin of the Sun.

ROLLA, (to Juan.)

Yes,—her name is Cora!

JUAN. (to Rolla.)

And this stranger, the favourite of your King; who, while you were defending his throne under the walls of Cusco, saved his life at Cannara:—You know him also?

ROLLA, (giving his hand to Alonzo.)

'Tis Alonzo.

JUAN. (to Alonzo.)

Now Rolla, if thou art such a man as I ever considered thee, thou wilt think and judge very differently from those Priests, who are so perpetually gazing on the Sun, that if by chance they cast their eyes below, every object appears burning and blazing to their dazzled sight. Thou know'st the world,—thou know'st the human heart; the numberless impetuous emotions that ebb and flow there;—the hundred imperious passions that contend for dominion there. Among them all, there is none so resistless as love:—*He* only triumphs, whom love never vouchsafed to defy. Behold this Virgin, she is beautiful?

ROLLA. (to Juan.)

To whom dost thou say that?

JUAN.

Behold this youth;—he is impetuous,—that he saw her,—that he loved her,—is *that* to be imputed to him as a crime?

ROLLA.

It is no crime.

JUAN. (to Rolla.)

I was not then deceived in my opinion of Rolla!

ALONZO. (to Juan.)

And thou wilt be silent? Thou wilt not betray the poor Cora, to inexpressible misery?

ROLLA.

I betray Cora!—know, young man, years are already past, since I have loved,—have adored her!

JUAN

JUAN and ALONZO, (*with the greatest surprise.*)

You?

ROLLA.

Oh! the impotence of words. Neither in my language, nor in yours, nor in any other, could I express to you what I feel for Cora. She was half a child, when I,—for the first time, marched against the rebel nations, that dwell at the foot of the Tangai. At that time she wept as we separated, and since that moment, I have known no other pleasure than the recollection of those tears. I returned; but alas! how every thing was changed; no longer the innocent child of nature, I found her the confidant of the Gods. She saw the purity, the ardor of my love, but she was grown a fanatic, she called the Sun her spouse, and treated me with disdain. The day soon arrived, on which a solemn vow rendered her for ever a Priestess of the Sun, and me the victim of her infatuation. Since when, for two years past, I have dragged on a miserable existence; have here and there gained a reputation for courage, because I sought death. A few weeks ago, I fixed my abode in this cave,—this cave which conceals me from the Sun, that robbed me of Cora.

ALONZO.

(*Who during Rolla's speech, had endeavoured in vain to bring Cora to herself, returns to Rolla, and takes him by the hand;*)

Believe me, I feel for you from my very heart—but how can I trust you—you, who are my rival.—swear then—

ROLLA.

Swear? what should I swear?

ALONZO.

That the wrath of the Gods may fall upon you, should your tongue ever betray that secret, which chance has this day discovered to you.

ROLLA.

I will not swear.

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ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Will not swear,—you who love Cora?

ROLLA.

Because I love Cora; what need of an oath?

ALONZO.

For my peace of mind!

ROLLA.

What's your peace of mind to me!

ALONZO.

I intreat you, can you desire to martyr me with perpetual torments? will you force me to commit a crime? for know; there are cases in which crimes become a duty.

ROLLA, (*ironically.*)

Indeed?

ALONZO.

As long as the slightest suspicion whispers me the possibility of your betraying Cora—mark me, Rolla, I honor you, but by mine and your God, I could hew you in pieces.

ROLLA.

I will not swear!

ALONZO.

I beseech you Rolla, what must I think of this refusal? see, how my whole frame is convulsed, how I tremble, how my veins swell, how I scarce breath for terror. Out of pity swear!

ROLLA.

I will not swear!

ALONZO,

(*Mad with rage, draws his sword and rushes upon Rolla.*)

Then die!

JUAN, (*Stopping him.*)

What again at variance with reason. Hold! hold! are you a knight?

ALONZO.

Loose me, I say, or I stab you also, (*strives to free himself.*)

JUAN.

JUAN.

This madman is too strong for me, (*contrives to tear his own sword from his side and throws it to Rolla.*) Here Rolla take it—I cannot hold him—defend yourself.

ROLLA.

(*Who composedly had never altered his posture,*)

O let him! I die with pleasure for Cora.

CORA.

(*During this tumult has recovered her senses, her first glance falls upon the combatants, and points out to her the danger. With wild terror, she collects her strength, rushes down the hill, and throws herself into Rolla's arms.*)
Alonzo! what wouldst thou do!

ALONZO, (*letting his sword sink.*)

What! you? 'tis you?—for your sake—should he betray you, you are lost—

CORA, (*with innocent confidence.*)

He betray me? Rolla, my friend betray me? he who always defended me, always took my part, while I was a mere child. When my mother frown'd upon me, how often has he pacified her.—Don't you remember it, Rolla?

ROLLA, (*with emotion.*)

Oh yes! remember?—

CORA.

And he,—he betray me?

ALONZO.

Why then does he refuse to take the oath I require of him?

CORA.

To what purpose an oath? look at his eye! is it not written there, that he is our friend?

ROLLA, (*pressing her to his bosom.*)

Now let me die! let me expire, ye Gods! in this blessed, this delicious moment! Cora has confidence in me. I hold thee in my arms,—I speak to thee,—I hear again thy beloved voice! these five years past I have only seen thee at a distance.

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CORA.

CORA, (*with cordiality.*)

And I indeed rejoice to see *thee* again. Thy presence recalls all the joyful hours of my youth, to my remembrance; they pass before my eyes in such gay colours!—

ALONZO, (*leaning on his sword, and with an emotion of jealousy.*)

Cora! you make me uneasy.

CORA.

Wherefore?—Oh! you know not how dear this man is to me! While he was yet a youth, he loved me. We were destined for each other. Were we not, Rolla?

ROLLA, (*with great emotion and confusion.*)

Yes—yes—we were;—for thy excellent mother—Ah! had she not died so soon—who knows—

CORA.

And, would you believe me, Alonzo? often have I ridiculed his passion; for I knew not *then* what love was. Oh! forgive me, forgive me. good Rolla! *now* I know better. Without doubt I have often tormented you, and bitterly.

ROLLA.

Often and bitterly indeed. But be it all forgotten! this moment is so blessed!

CORA, (*to Alonzo.*)

Oh! listen,—how good he is! my mother was always saying, “Rolla is good. Love him;—become his wife,—and I shall die content.”—But at the time she died, Rolla had marched against the enemy. A holy flame was kindled in my breast:—he returned, but I could no longer love him: my heart belonged to the Gods; I languished for the day which was to unite me for ever to the Sun.

ROLLA.

And nature at length has triumphed over this enthusiasm?—you love?

CORA.

I love! yes Rolla: to thee let me confide the sentiments of my heart.—I love this blooming youth! I saw him, for the

the first time, in the Temple, by the king's side, and my trembling hand almost let fall the consecrated cup. His ardent glance ever directed toward me, soon betrayed to me that he felt and returned my affection. Long did we languish hopeless of an opportunity of ever meeting or embracing,—while I was immured within the limits of our Temple, and he stole with watchful and melancholy steps around its walls. The Gods saw, and had compassion on us. Dost thou remember that horrible night, when a few moons ago, the mountains around us vomited fire, the sea boiled, and the earth trembled? Many a gorgeous palace was transformed to a dreary pile of ruins;—the holy Temple of the Sun itself was shaken. The walls which surround it, trembled, and threatened every instant to bury us in their ruins. Pale and aghast my terrified sisters rushed wildly from their retreats, but knew not where to fly for safety or refuge.—Death was in our cells,—death in the open air.—We mixed our shrieks and lamentations with the loud fury of the contending elements. At this moment, my undaunted Alonzo, pressing thro' the interwoven bushes, discovered a chasm in the wall, and ventured thro' it. One stone after another yielded and fell beneath his feet;—there, the earth opened to swallow him;—here, my arms were spread to receive him;—darkness was the veil of our love:—we escaped undiscovered,—and many an evening since has my Alonzo ventured over these ruins to meet his Cora.

ROLLA.

I tremble, Cora!—what audacity!

ALONZO.

Tell him all;—the consequence of thy weakness,—of my transgression, tell him—

CORA, (*innocently to Rolla.*)

Yes, dearest Rolla!—

ROLLA, (*with horror.*)

What! what! rash inconsiderate creature!—(*to Alonzo*)

And

And *thou*, stranger! is it possible that thou could'st be so far ignorant of our manners and customs, that—Oh, ye Gods!—you must fly! you must fly!

JUAN.

But whither?

ALONZO.

Oh Rolla!—save her!

CORA, (*terrified.*)

Is it then possible?—what the Gods themselves are not offended by, is here among mortals considered a transgression?

ROLLA.

How it has affected me! I have not yet recovered my senses. Hear me, Cora! dost thou love this man?

CORA.

As my own soul.

ROLLA.

Indeed!—Dost thou feel, that in his arms no repentance could ever torture thee,—wilt thou consent to be his wife from this day till the hour of thy death?

CORA.

I will.

ROLLA, (*to Alonzo.*)

And thou,—dost thou feel the value of the sacrifice she has made to thee?

ALONZO.

I feel it.

ROLLA.

Well then,—I will save you. (*Placing himself between them*) Approach me;—receive me as your brother! Cora! my beloved sister! (*joining her hand with Alonzo's*) I betroth thee to this man; may the shade of thy blessed mother hover over us at this moment! her blessing descend upon thee! if *thou* art happy, I shall be so also. (*Turning away and wiping a tear from his eye.*)

ALONZO,

ALONZO and CORA, (*embracing him.*)

Our brother!—our loved brother!

ROLLA, (*pressing them to his heart.*)

Your brother!—I will accompany your flight. In a wild country far beyond those blue mountains, I have a friend; a Casique; the governor of a mild peaceable people, and the vassal of the King of Cusco, whom he and his tribe assisted during the last war. At that time, I took his son, a promising youth, prisoner. He was severely wounded. Thro' my care he recovered, and I restored him without ransom to his father.—Since that time, these good people know not how sufficiently to express their gratitude.—They will be delighted to receive us, and amid their distant forests your love will find a safe asylum. There will I live with you, educate your children, and be chearful and content, if I see Cora happy; and when, on some future day, I shall retire among my forefathers, you, like a brother and sister, shall lament my absence.

CORA.

My good Rolla! how my mother will thank you there!

ALONZO.

Noble generous man! I scarce dare look you in the face.

JUAN, (*aside, endeavouring to conceal a tear.*)

By all the saints! if he be not a christian, I also am a heathen.

ROLLA.

Let us now recollect our thoughts, we are determined on flight; but how and when? this must be considered.

DIEGO.

(*Who during the whole scene, had been on the watch in the back ground, comes forward with marks of anxiety.*)

I hear a rustling, I hear a couple of women chattering behind the wall.

ROLLA.

Come! come then into my cave.

(*As*

(As they are going, Idali and Amazili have already crept thro' the rent in the wall, and are seen listening with marks of curiosity.)

Enter IDALI and AMAZILI.

ALONZO.

Too late! they are already there.

IDALI, (calls.)

Cora! we were looking for you!

CORA.

I'm coming!

ROLLA.

Stop one moment! They have seen us. For God's sake let them not go in this way. We must lull to sleep their timidity,—we must draw them over to our party.

JUAN.

That were a master-piece for a minister; should he bring this about, he could conquer provinces without a blow.

ROLLA.

Nothing is easier. Flatter them,—they are women.

JUAN.

Beautiful children! won't you come nearer?

IDALI, (to Amazili.)

I believe he means us.

AMAZILI.

See! how he stares! let's be off.

IDALI.

Come, Cora, the High-priestess has sent us after you.

ALONZO, (intreating.)

Approach, holy virgins.

JUAN.

Permit us to pay homage to your charms.

IDALI, (to Amazili.)

Shall we run away?

AMAZILI.

Yes, let's fly. (Neither stir from the spot.)

CORA.

CORA.

I'll go with you directly. Why are you so shy? why hide yourselves behind the trees? come hither my dear sisters.

IDALI.

No indeed. You are among men!

JUAN.

Men? what mistake us for men? no, my lovely girl, we are only Spaniards. That one there will be so obliging as to depart, if you are afraid of his presence. (*Winks to Rolla.*)

ROLLA.

With all my heart. (*Exit into his cave.*)

JUAN.

Now, my charming girls, why so timid?

AMAZILI, (*to Idali.*)

What think you? may we venture?

IDALI.

You go first; I'll follow you.

AMAZILI.

No;—you're older than I am.

IDALI.

But you crept thro' the wall first.

AMAZILI.

But you first discovered the rent in the wall.

JUAN.

The dispute is soon settled, (*tuns between and draws them both forward*) now you may both swear, that neither advanced first.

AMAZILI, (*terrified.*)

Ah! Idali, he has seized me.

IDALI.

And me also.

JUAN.

Courage my little angels! we'll not hurt your little finger.

G

(*stroking*)

(*stroking Idali under the chin*) you are blooming as a rose,
and you (*turning to Amazili*) as a—a—a—(*is at a loss for
a simile.*)

DIEGO, (*with an air of gallantry.*)

As a sun-flower.

JUAN, (*to Idali.*)

Your eyes are so soft and blue.

DIEGO, (*to Amazili.*)

And your looks are so fly.

JUAN.

The smile in your countenance—so sweet.

DIEGO.

And your cherry lips so tempting.

JUAN, (*taking Idali's band.*)

And this hand so warm and soft.

DIEGO, (*putting his band round Amazili's waist.*)

And your waist, ah! how taper.

AMAZILI, (*to Idali.*)

Shall we run away.

IDALI.

Not yet, we'll stay a little longer.

AMAZILI.

But is it quite certain that you are not men,—we are dead
creatures, if you deceive us.

JUAN.

Fear not! joy dwells in our arms.

DIEGO.

And love in our hearts.

IDALI, (*playing with Juan's hair.*)

Look at his curling hair!

AMAZILI, (*stroking Diego's cheeks.*)

And his rosy cheeks, so fresh.

(*Don Juan kisses Idali, and Diego Amazili.*)

IDALI, and AMAZILI, (*both starting at the same time.*)

Ah! what was that.

IDALI

Idali, (*drawing breath.*)

Ah! I can scarce breathe.

AMAZILI.

O! I burn to the very tips of my fingers.

CORA.

Come along my sisters, or we shall be missed.

Idali.

And the High-priestess will scold.

AMAZILI.

And to-day we must put on our holiday cloaths.

Idali.

And no one is in the Temple. The holy flame will go out.

DIEGO.

O never mind; you may light it from your sparkling eyes.

CORA.

Tell me, Idali, what were the orders of the High-priestess.

Idali.

As we came into the Temple to relieve you, and could not find you, we returned to the High-priestess, and acquainted her with it, and she bid us look for you in the garden.

CORA.

Was that all?

AMAZILI.

And when we found you, we should bring you to her.

JUAN.

And if she asks you, where you found Cora, what answer will you give?

Idali.

O! we will tell her of your pretty locks, and sweet words.

JUAN.

O! for Heaven's sake! my lovely angels, do no such thing. She might be angry at your long absence, and forbid you to see us

G 2

again;

again; (*caressing her,*) and would you not like to chat with us a little now and then?

DIEGO, (*coaxing Amazili,*)

I'll tell you what, you little baggage, you please me mightily, you must come very often.

AMAZILI, *to IDALI.*

What shall we say, Idali?

IDALI.

We'll think about it.

JUAN,

Say, that Cora had fallen asleep in a corner of the Temple, and that a shadow of a pillar, had at first hid her from your sight.

DIEGO.

Or under a palm tree, before the Temple.

AMAZILI.

O that will do!

IDALI.

Ah! that is a good plan.

CORA.

Come then, let us hasten,

AMAZILI.

Come then.

IDALI.

Come away.

JUAN.

Go, my lovely angels. (*neither of them stir from the spot.*)

DIEGO.

Go, you little rose.

IDALI. (*delaying.*)

I am going,—but can't you contrive—once more—to make us feel so oddly as just now?

AMAZILI. (*to Diego.*)

Try, if I shriek so a second time.—

(*Juan and Diego kiss them, Amazili and Idali shrieking.*)

Ah!

Ah! (*with a deep sigh*) now farewell, farewell! (*they trip away.*)

CORA, (*embracing Alonzo.*)

Farewell, my beloved!

ALONZO.

Farewell, soon to be my wife! (*Exit Cora.*)

(*Enter Rolla, from his Cave.*)

ROLLA.

Have you tamed them?

DIEGO.

Could roll them round my little finger.

JUAN.

Rolla knows their sex.

ROLLA.

From hearfay!

DIEGO.

The adventure tickles my fancy;—'twas a delicious little animal.

JUAN.

But a cloud pregnant with thunder hangs over our heads, and threatens our destruction.

ALONZO, (*taking Rolla's band.*)

It is on you, our brother, that we depend for assistance.

ROLLA.

Be not uneasy. Together we will consider of the best means of saving you. New life, new ardour is instilled into my frame;—I feel myself another being. I have now some interest, some tie, to bind me to the world;—Every thing is no longer indifferent to me. New projects, new desires, are awakened in my heart!—Thanks Cora, for this mild dew which refreshes the withering plant;—(*with noble warmth*) yes, we will fly. There is danger in the flight, but so much the better.—When our pursuers are close at our heels, when their cries sound in our ears, when their arrows whistle around us,—*that*
indeed

indeed will be a glorious moment!—(*with enthusiasm*) To fight for Cora! for Cora to brandish the sword!—Then shall ye see the force of Rolla!—Ye called me brave under the walls of Cusco!—on the plains of Tumibamba: mere trifles!—I never yet have combated for Cora! *for* Cora, and *before* her eyes—Ha! I shall then be a God.

ALONZO, (*embracing him.*)

Great man! Oh! look with an eye of friendship upon me. Let me be assured, that you have forgiven my intemperate heat.

ROLLA.

No, Alonzo. Do not ascribe to me, a virtue, that does not belong to me: for Cora alone am I interested;—for *her* am I exerting myself; not for thee. Had Cora, let fall a faded flower into the water, and said to me, “I wish I had that flower again,” I would have dashed into the stream, and fetched it to her, though at the hazard of my life. Her love had beforehand, secured to thee my friendship; and it was from these motives alone, that I have pardoned thee.

ALONZO.

Let me at any rate hope, that you will one day, for my own sake, find me worthy of your friendship.

ROLLA.

Cora loves thee! Oh! what other recommendation can’st thou need?—If Cora loved me, the very Gods themselves, should court my friendship.—But why do we waste that time in talking, which might be better spent in acting?—come with me into my cave. There, secure from every intruder, we may arrange, and consider our projects. The flowing bowl, shall pass gaily round—To day I will drink, will carouse: I am already intoxicated, inebriated with joy: In a ferment from head to foot! like a bent bow, all my powers are at full stretch! to day I could govern a world!—(*he seizes Alonzo by the hand, and leads him into his cave.*)

JUAN,

JUAN, (*following.*)

It is fortunate for the King of Quito, that this man is in love. To love, or to hurl *him* from his throne, is the destiny of this Hero. (Exit)

DIEGO.

Drink and carouse?—I'm of the party. Well said! to the health of my little Sun-flower!—(*follows into the cave.*)

ACT III

ACT III.

Chamber of the High-Priestess, in the Palace of the Sun.—Various cages with Turtle-doves, Parrots, and other tame birds, hang, or are fixed to the wall. The High-priestess is busy feeding them in their turns.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

HERE little Bibi—now for you! what you rogue, devoured every crumb?—How these girls daudle, talking and gossiping in some corner, and about, they know not what.—Yes, yes, lulu, wait till your turn—now then.—With these lazy drones, I could lose all patience! O these loitering huffies! they are as stuped as oysters, and slow as turtles.—Come pretty dududu, come here; (*she whistles and chirps with her mouth*) take and give some to your lovy! (*drawing back her hand quickly*) O you sly one! what can you bite?—no that's not pretty.—See the Sun is already above the mountains—these shameless girls rely too much on my good nature: Is it not so Bibi? I'm not cross enough—am I Lulu? locking them up—on bread and water,—that would tame them, and bring them into order; would it not Dudu?—

Enter Idali and Amazili, (running breathless, and speaking both at the same time.)

Here we are then.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Less noise, less noise, I beg.—What frighten my poor Bibi. So here you are at last?

IDALI.

Yes, indeed, we have been running so.

HIGH-

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

And where then have you been ?

(IDALI and AMAZILI, *speaking at the same time.*)

In the Temple!—In the garden !

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

One of you has told a fib.

(IDALI and AMAZILI, *frightened.*)

I have told one ! I have told one !

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

What then, one of you has told another fib. What can this mean ? Idali, go you into that corner. Well :—Amazili, come here. (*She leads them to different corners of the room, whispering to Amazili,*) Tell me then, are you really just come from the Temple ?

AMAZILI.

Yes.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Stay there without stirring. (*advancing to Idali,*) I cannot yet believe you. Amazili maintains firmly, that ye are just come out of the garden. Tell me the truth.

IDALI.

Yes we *are* just come out of the garden.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Yes, yes, I see you are a couple of huffies. I must come to the bottom of this affair. Stay there without stirring in your corners. What do you mean by winking, and nodding, and making signs to each other ? Fix your eyes on the ground, both of you, immediately. So ! (*advancing to Amazili,*) did you find Cora ?

AMAZILI.

Yes.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Where ?

H

AMAZILI.

AMAZILI.

She had fallen asleep under the shadow of the palm tree that grows before the porch of the temple.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Very well.—Dont stir from this spot, and fix your eyes on the ground. (*advancing to Idali.*) Did you find Cora.

IDALI.

Yes.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Where was she?

IDALI.

She had crept behind the shadow of a pillar in the Temple, and had fallen fast asleep there. We ran past it more than twenty times without perceiving her.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

So, so!—come here both: (*taking them by the hand, and looking them, one after the other, full in the face,*) You are both liars. You say she was asleep within the Temple, under the shadow of a pillar; and you, before the porch of the Temple, under the shadow of a palm tree.

(*Idali and Amazili, very much frightened and confused, hem and cough.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Well? when shall I hear the truth?

IDALI, (*to Amazili.*)

You simpleton! you have forgot every thing!

AMAZILI.

Not I, but you?

IDALI.

No! 'tis you!

AMAZILI.

I know very well, that mine told me, I was to say, under the shadow of a palm tree!

IDALI.

IDALI.

That's a fib. *Mine* advised me to say, under the shadow of a pillar.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Mine and mine! Who then do you mean?

(*Idali, and Amazili, still more confused.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Won't you confess by fair means? I'll soon contrive to set your tongues in motion.

IDALI.

Ah now,—this is all your fault.

AMAZILI.

No 'tis yours.

IDALI.

No, I never should have mentioned him, if you had not begun.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Him? whom?—whom?—ye impious children! The Gods preserve us from such profanation, but I really believe you have been among men.

IDALI and AMAZILI.

Oh no! oh no!

IDALI.

They were not men.

AMAZILI.

Nothing but Spaniards.

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*basily.*)

Spaniards? what Spaniards? (*disguising her anger, and with assumed tranquility,*) So,—nothing but Spaniards? that may be passed over. Were there many of them?

AMAZILI, (*with talkative childish delight.*)

Three;—One for Cora, one for Idali, and one for me. Mine had such pretty brown hair—oh! and such eyes!

IDALI.

Mine had fine curling black hair;—and such a mild friendly countenance!—

H 2

AMAZILI.

AMAZILI.

But mine was the handsomeft.

IDALI.

No fuch thing. Mine was the handsomeft.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Be filent, children; we'll fettle this point another time. Tell me now, by what magic did thefe Spaniards gain admittance into the Temple?

IDALI.

They were not in the Temple.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

What then, had they flown over the high walls of the garden?

IDALI.

They were not in the garden.

AMAZILI.

But they might have got into the garden, as eafily as we got out of the garden.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

So, fo! you were out of the garden: let us hear how you could contrive that?

IDALI.

We were looking for Cora as you ordered us, and running up and down calling her; but all to no purpofe. At laft we flood ftill and liftened, when on a fudden we thought we heard a number of ftrange voices beyond the wall. It was not far from the harbour where the little brook lofes itfelf among the bufhes. We followed the found: we flooped, and crept foftly thro' the thicket. Oh! how the brambles scratched us! On a fudden we came to a great huge gap in the wall, a rent from top to bottom in it; fo broad and low, that Amazili and I had nothing to do but to fpring over a few loofe ftones, and we were on the outside of the wall in a moment.

HIGH-

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

So, so!—you did spring over then?

AMAZILI.

To be sure. Did not you tell us to look for Cora?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Certainly. And did you find Cora there?

IDALI,

Yes, in the midst of three Spaniards. We mistook them at first for men, and were going to run away, but when we had examined them, and found they were only Spaniards, we were at last persuaded to talk and chat a little with them.—

AMAZILI.

And we promised to come again.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Indeed! did you really promise to meet them again?

IDALI.

A kind of half-promise.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Which you will doubtless keep.

AMAZILI.

What say you, Idali?

IDALI.

Perhaps,—if you have no objection?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Oh! why should I object?—go now, call Cora hither: meanwhile, dress yourselves; prepare the consecrated bread, and fill the baskets with it.

IDALI, (*taking Amazili by the band.*)

Come Sister! Oh! with what pleasure I could dance to-day;

AMAZILI.

And I could laugh and sing. (*Exeunt both.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*alone.*)

Oh! dance, laugh and sing then. Your simplicity shields you from my anger.—The rent in the wall, however, shall no longer be open to you. But Cora!—can that shameless creature

ture hold converse with men? chaste Oello! avert the profanation! I have long remarked how she hangs her head; how lost in thought; how absent she appears;—never knows to whom she is speaking,—never hears what others say. The bright colour is faded from her cheeks.—Aye! aye! these are bad signs—are they not, Duda?

Enter Cora.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

What! do you still dare to come into my presence?

CORA, (*tranquilly.*)

I have just left the presence of our God.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Return him thanks then, that he has not invested me with his thunder.—

CORA.

What are your commands with me? In what have I offended you?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Do you imagine your impious conduct is still a secret? that we are ignorant how Cora has profaned these holy walls: has disgraced her own honor: and the honor of her sisters?

CORA.

I have done nothing wrong!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Look me in the face? Cora, you have an acquaintance with men.

CORA.

I have never offended the Gods.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Cora, you have conversed with a Spaniard!

CORA.

I am innocent.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

This very morning, you have seen, and spoken to him!

CORA.

CORA.

The Sun himself witnessed my every action.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Acknowledge your transgression!

CORA.

I have not transgressed.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Deceived, infatuated creature!

CORA.

The path I have trod is the path of innocence and nature.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

What hardness of heart! what perverseness!—You are a Priestess of the Sun:—Tremble at the thought of those tortures, which our rigorous laws have ordained to punish such a crime!

CORA.

I should suffer undeservedly. My innocence would support me.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Have you then nothing to confide to me?

CORA.

Nothing.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Will you not confess?

CORA.

What?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

For the last time, Cora, I warn you! a very few moments are yet allowed you;—make use of them. Already I am well informed;—already I know every circumstance. Make use of them: or I'll assemble the Virgins in the Temple, convoke the body of the Priests. They will judge you;—and severely judge you. Your sentence is death;—and worse than death; infamy!—At present we are alone;—are you still determined to keep silence?

CORA.

CORA.

Yes.

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*changing her tone.*)

Oh no! Cora was never perverse. I knew your mother; when you were a mere child; I was well acquainted with her. "My Cora," she used to say, "is of a soft, tractable disposition; it is this which so strongly endears her to me."

CORA.

Did she say so?—Oh! she was a good mother! All the joys of my life were buried in her grave!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Is the memory of your mother dear and sacred to you?

CORA.

Can you ask?—Oh! how many silent tears have been consecrated to it!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

And now in the grave, would you convict her of falsehood? "A mild tractable disposition," were these the words of truth, or of blind maternal affection?

CORA.

Oh! of truth! of truth!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Then prove it now. Has the friend of the mother no claim to the confidence of the daughter?

CORA, (*sighs.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

I still hear the last words her pale lips pronounced, "My Cora is young and unexperienced. Should she ever need the counsels of a mother, consider her as your child." So she said, as with her cold hand she pressed mine.

CORA, (*seems undecided, and at variance with herself.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

And your respectable father, as he resigned you into my hands, "Receive her," said he, "she is a well-disposed child; and will cause you no uneasiness." And as he prest the last
kiss

kiss on your forehead, and a tear trembled through his grey eye-lashes,—you cannot forget his words, “Honor her as your mother.”

CORA, (*falls at her feet.*)

I love !

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*with horror.*)

You love ?

CORA.

I will no longer be a Priestess.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

No longer a Priestess ?

CORA.

I intend to marry !

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

You !—to marry ?

CORA.

The Gods bestowed on me a heart.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

To the Gods that heart was consecrated.—The Sun is your spouse.

CORA.

My prayers, my gratitude, belong to the Sun ;—my love, my heart, to Alonzo.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Cora ! recollect yourself ;—recover yourself ; arise : consider your words.

CORA.

They came from my very heart. And if you loved my mother,—Oh ! for that mother's sake, assist her child !

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

To shew you how I respect her memory, I will conceal what has passed. I will be silent : and you, by severe repentance, must appease the wrath of the Gods. Root out his image from your heart ;—forget his deceitful words ;—avoid all recollection of him ;—pray and work.

I

CORA.

CORA.

Ah! you never can have loved!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Never! praised be the Gods!

CORA.

Allow me then, to say to you, that your precepts are impossible. Root out his image from my heart! never think of him! Oh! my dear mother, you have never loved!—When I awake, he is my first thought! When I kneel in the Temple, his name interrupts my prayers: When I turn to the image of the Sun, I see only him: When I should think of my God, I think only of him.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Grievous transgressions, Cora!—Pray, fast, and repent!

CORA.

I cannot pray, but to possess Alonzo. Ah! there is something so soft, so heart-felt in love:—Are you then quite sure it is criminal?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Criminal, my daughter?—impious! detestable!

CORA.

And are you then quite free from it?

HIGH-PRIESTESS. (*with an air of piety.*)

I have consecrated myself to the Gods.

CORA.

You are either deceiving me, or yourself. How often have I seen you feeding these birds, with such tenderness and affection;—now inviting this, now that one, out of his cage; now placing him on your hand; stroking him; prattling to him; kissing him.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Oh! the little pretty creatures. Such an innocent attachment.

CORA.

As innocent is my affection!

HIGH-

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

What! love toward a man?

CORA.

That's all the same; you are contented with a Dove! Is it my fault, if I be not so easily satisfied!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Deceive not yourself Cora! Is it the same thing, whether you make use of fire to sacrifice, or to set the Temple in flames?

CORA.

Such comparisons only puzzle me. In the language of simplicity, my heart bade me love, and the event has justified the command. When Cora performed the service in the Temple, did the weather ever change? did the Sun ever shroud himself in clouds?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Because you have only sinned in the dark; because the rays of our great God have never witnessed your transgression.

CORA.

Oh! yes, they have. This very morning, before the presence of the Sun; I solemnly embraced Alonzo.

HIGH-PRIESTESS. (*shocked.*)

Embraced!

CORA.

Pressed my lips to his lips—

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Your lips!

CORA.

My bosom to his.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Your bosom!

CORA.

And our God smiled!

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Enough, wretch! go, and hide yourself, lest I repent the promise of silence I have made to you. 'Tis no longer your

honor, but the honor of our order I must spare. Go! and whatever pain or anguish it may cost you, you *must* forget him,—you shall never see him more.

CORA, *(with resolution.)*

I will no longer be a Priestess of the Sun.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Death only can absolve you from the sacred vows you have taken.

CORA.

But you say I am a wretch, a criminal! how then can I longer serve the Sun? But suppose I were to substitute in my place, a pure and innocent being? would it not be more pleasing to the Sun, and absolve me from my vows?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

I do not understand you.

CORA.

I will consecrate to his service the Innocent I bear under my heart.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

(Starting back with horror; she attempts in vain to speak; trembles, and supports herself against a seat.)

CORA.

What ails you? have you not understood me? I will consecrate to the Sun the Innocent I bear under my heart.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

(Flying from her and exclaiming distractedly.)

Idali! Runa! Amazili! haste, haste! ye daughters of the Sun! I can no longer support it! I faint! *(She sinks upon a seat.)*

Idali, Amazili, and other Virgins of the Sun enter confusedly from different sides.

ALL, *(at the same time exclaiming.)*

What's the matter?—what has happened? she is in a swoon. Explain to us, Cora! what has happened, and what has thus agitated her?

CORA.

CORA, (*composed.*)

I know not.

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*recovering.*)

Arise, ye daughters of the Sun! shut up that outcast wretch in the deepest and darkest dungeon. Let not the pure rays of our God be defiled by the sight of her: to you Odila and Runa, I commit the charge of her person; be you answerable for her till the moment of her trial. Ye other daughters of the Sun, veil yourselves in the deepest mourning, and follow me to the palace of our King. The Sun frowns; the Gods are enraged;—the curse of sin hovers over us,—over all Peru. The vengeance of heaven will visit us. Away! extinguish the lamps in the Temple; tear down the garlands. Let not this day be consecrated as a festival; it is a day of mourning. Away! to the foot of the throne. Vengeance! vengeance on the guilty! (*She rushes off the Stage.*)

(*A confused noise, many voices at once.*)

Cora! what have you done?

CORA, (*composed.*)

I have done nothing wrong.

(*Exit.*)

(*Many voices, as they follow her.*)

Have a strict eye on her. You must answer for her if she escape. Come! come!

(*Exeunt.*)

(*A hall in the Inca's palace, where the body-guard are on duty;—after a few moments a Chamberlain appears.*)

CHAMBERLAIN.

Fling open the doors! let every one enter, who may wish to greet the descendant of the Sun.

(*The doors are opened, and by degrees, the High-Priest, Xaira, Alonzo, Juan, Diego, many Courtiers, and Priests enter.*)

XAIRA,

XAIRA, (*to the High-Priest.*)

What would these strangers here,

HIGH-PRIEST.

They probably mean to attend the King when he sacrifices in the Temple.

XAIRA.

Detestable! it is not fit, that strangers should be permitted to be spectators of our sacred rites;—perhaps to scoff at our religious worship.

HIGH-PRIEST.

To scoff!—that were indeed folly. And I trust that noble youth, has nothing like it in his disposition. Have you forgotten that our King is indebted to him for his life? that thro' him, who taught them the discipline of his nation, our troops are become the terror of their enemies? that it was he who instructed us in many of the useful arts of peace?

XAIRA.

Trifles! he has only augmented our necessities. We were happier without him.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Obdurate man!

CHAMBERLAIN.

Has the company no news for the King's entertainment.

1st. COURTIER.

None;—except that the old Telasko arrived last night out of the country.

2nd. COURTIER.

He has brought his son Zorai with him, to be presented to the Inca.

CHAMBERLAIN.

How long is it since we saw that respectable old man?

1st. COURTIER.

Two years ago;—he then placed his daughter in the Palace of the Sun.

ALONZO,

(ALONZO, *starting.*)

Dost thou mark, Velasques?—Cora's Father is here.

JUAN.

So it seems.

ALONZO.

And her brother too!

JUAN.

So it seems.

ALONZO!

—Another dagger in my heart! how will every unmeaning look from them torture my conscience.

(*From behind the scenes is heard a short march of warlike instruments.*)

COURTIERS, &c.

The King is coming!

(*Enter Ataliba, with attendants.*)

ATALIBA, (*addressing himself to the High-Priest:*)

I am happy my venerable friend, to observe that your vigour triumphs over the burden of your age.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Age enjoys a second youth under such a Monarch!

ATALIBA.

For what I am; I am indebted to you: This I shall never forget. (*to Xaira,*) We have a fine day, Xaira; the Gods are gracious to us.

XAIRA, (*gloomily.*)

Nevertheless, sad omens disturb my soul!

ATALIBA.

How so?

XAIRA.

The lamb, which at midnight, I sacrificed to the Gods, struggled against the consecrated knife:

ATALIBA.

Very naturally.

XAIRA.

XATRA.

And the lungs, which when they quiver and tremble, announce a year of plenty and prosperity ; to-day lay still and motionless.

ATALIBA.

I thank you for the intelligence : but beware of publishing it among the people. (*whispering to the High-Priest,*) We have tygers enough to disturb us, must we then tremble for lambs ?

HIGH-PRIEST.

To the people, is such a lamb more tremendous than a tyger ? and a King, must respect even the superstitions of his subjects.—

ATALIBA.

True my friend: Upon them Manco Capac founded his dominion.—(*to Alonzo,*) Well my dear Alonzo ! are you still pleased with your stay among us ?

ALONZO.

As long as you are not displeased with it, Inca.

ATALIBA.

That is, as long as I love my friends, (*to Juan,*) How fares Don Juan ? what progress have those troops made, which you have undertaken to discipline ?

JUAN.

Warriors indeed ! They have arms of iron, and hearts of wax.

ATALIBA.

Ah ! that a continual peace would allow me to employ their strong arms, only in agriculture !—(*to the High-Priest,*) It must be time to visit the Temple.

HIGH-PRIEST.

We are ready.

(*Enter the Chamberlain, who had been called out by the guard ;*)

CHAMBERLAIN.

Telasko, the governor of Mount Antes, is arrived ; and desires to greet the eldest descendant of the Sun.

ATALIBA.

What my honest old Telasko ? conduct him hither.

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Ah! Velasques! my heart!—my heart!

JUAN.

Do not betray yourself.

(*On a signal from the Chamberlain, the Guards open the doors, and Telasko and Zorai enter.*)

ATALIBA, (*advancing to him, and embracing him.*)

Welcome! my worthy friend. What has drawn you from your enviable retirement into the bustle of a court? (*to the attendants*) Bring the old man a seat.

TELASKO.

Two years ago I was here with my daughter Cora. I consecrated her to the service of the Gods; such being her own inclination. That it was much against mine, I cannot deny, I was so accustomed to her society: since my wife's death, I had become weak and sickly; she had nursed and attended me, and indeed it cost me many a tear to separate from her. This youth remained, my only possession. He is grown a man. His sister is consecrated to the Gods, and him I dedicate to the service of his country. Inca, I resign him to you. My end approaches. Be you his father, when I die. That he will conduct himself well, I am confident. He will never forget that the blood of the Inca flows in his veins.. Accept graciously my offering. I offer you my only, my most valuable possession.

ATALIBA.

He shall be as our only son. Approach, young man. (*Zorai kneels before him*) Inherit your father's virtues, and you shall inherit his dignities.

ZORAI.

Pardon me, if I want words to express my gratitude.—Time alone can shew whether I merit such favor.

ATALIBA.

Arise. I appoint you one of my body-guard.—I resign

K

him

him into your hands, Alonzo; teach him at your side to fight and conquer:

ALONZO.

I will endeavor to acquire his confidence.

TELASKO, (*to Alonzo.*)

You are the man then, whom the people of Quito bless as the preserver of their King? permit mine aged arms to embrace you! (*he embraces him*) your fame has reached our distant mountains; our infants learn to list your name. How happy then, my son, in such a leader!

ALONZO, (*with emotion.*)

He shall be my brother.

TELASKO, (*to Ataliba,*)

You have sweetened my last moments. I thank you.

(*The march is heard again behind the scenes.*)

ATALIBA.

Now my children. let us away to the Temple. Come Telasko, walk at my right hand, and when you are weary, support yourself on me. How oft have I supported myself on you?

(*As they are about to depart, the music stops of a sudden.*)

ATALIBA, (*astonished.*)

What can this mean?

A COURTIER, (*who rushes in, trembling and out of breath.*)

The High-Priests of the Sun approaches, leading a long procession, veiled in mourning. Their sighs and lamentations make the blood run cold: the people follow trembling and dejected, and apprehend some heavy calamity,

(*The whole assembly discover marks of fear.*)

ATALIBA, (*who alone remains tranquil.*)

Conduct them hither.

ALONZO.

Velasques!—Oh, Heavens! what can have happened?

JUAN.

Fie! I verily believe you tremble. Collect yourself;—be a man!

(*The*

(The doors are opened)

(The High-Priestess enters leading a solemn procession, of the Virgins of the Sun. They are covered with black veils, and their actions and attitudes are expressive of the deepest dejection: a dead silence reigns.)

HIGH-PRIESTESS, *(throwing back her veil.)*

Vengeance! vengeance! vengeance!

ATALIBA, *(rather moved.)*

On whom?

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

The Temple is profaned;—the altars are defiled;—the holy lamp is extinguished! vengeance! vengeance!

ATALIBA.

Name the offender! that the wrath of Heaven may unite with mine.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Son of the Sun! bid the festive song cease. Let the strings of harmony be dumb. Strip the Temple of its ornaments, and the victims of their garlands. To-day let no feast be celebrated: Complaints be our song, and the garb of mourning, our attire. A viper has with its poison defiled the Temple of the Gods! A virgin of the Sun has broke her vow of chastity! *(She pauses, all seem petrified with horror; Alonzo thunder-struck; she continues)* Vengeance! vengeance, on Cora!

(An exclamation of grief escapes the King. The old Telasco trembling, supports himself on his staff. Zorai, covered with shame, conceals his face in his garment; Alonzo, who is near falling, is supported by Don Juan. A confused murmur runs through the rest of the assembly)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Vengeance! vengeance; on the murderer of her virtue! on the defaulter, who has abused the hospitality of a generous nation! who has profaned the sacred asylum of the spouses of the Sun! Vengeance! vengeance on Alonzo!

(*The King starts ;—Alonzo stands deadly pale, and trembling. Every eye is fixed upon him. Telasko looks around him with a wild unmeaning stare.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Eldest son of the Sun ! Image of our God on earth ;—I stand before you, and demand a bloody example.

ATALIBA, (*with gloomy resolution*)

Justice shall be done you !

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

Death and infamy on the criminals ! death and infamy on Cora's race !

(*The old Telasko, repeats the word "Infamy!" and swoons. Zorai casts himself down beside him.*)

ATALIBA.

Merciful Gods !—Help ! help the poor old man !

(*The Courtiers raise Telasko. The High-Priestess is about to continue. The King makes a sign to her to be silent.*)

ATALIBA.

Enough ! enough, holy woman ! I know my duty, and will fulfil what the laws of Manco require of me.—I need not ask, Alonzo ! if this accusation is true. Your confession is written upon your death-pale cheeks.—You are lost ! I cannot save you !—Had you fomented a rebellion in my provinces, had your sword ravished from me half my empire, I would have offered you my hand, and said, " You have saved my life, and I will share with you : " but in this case, I cease to be a King : and friendship must be silent. You are lost !—I cannot save you ! (*In a tone of melancholy reproach*) Alonzo ! Alonzo ! what have you done ?

ALONZO.

Let me die ! I have enjoyed so much kindness in your kingdom ; and oh ! with what ingratitude I have returned it. Let me die ! (*falling on his knees*) but oh ! deliver Cora ! she is innocent ! her seducer alone is guilty !

ATALABI.

ATALIBA.

Rife! my power has boundaries; and is most limited on that side where it borders on religion. (*He seems for a moment lost in thought, and at variance with himself: then with averted face*) Guards! chain him; (*He is going.*)

XAIRA.

It will be proper also, to chain the brother and the father.

ATALIBA,

The poor old man! what, may not *he* escape you?

XAIRA.

At any rate, the brother!

ATABILA.

Be it,—if it must be so. How wretched is it to be a King, when one must punish. (*Exit.*)

(*Zorai is chained.*)

HIGH-PRIESTESS, (*to the High-Priest.*)

Arise! first servant of our God! give vengeance wings; that his departing ray may fall upon their graves. Away, ye daughters of the Sun! fall prostrate in prayer! wash the Altar with your tears,—and veil your blushing cheeks, till that mark of infamy be defaced, with which this detestable stranger has dared to brand our order!

(*Exit, followed by the train of Virgins.*)

HIGH-PRIEST, (*aside.*)

Rolla! unfortunate Rolla!

(*Exit.*)

XAIRA, (*to some of the Priests.*)

Go ye! and prepare their graves!

TELASKO.

And lay me first within it!

(*Exeunt Priests.*)

XAIRA, (*to the Guards.*)

Away with the prisoners!

ALONZO, (*to Juan.*)

Farewel, Velasques! If ever you return to Spain, remember me

me to my mother—and conceal from her my unhappy fate.

TELASKO, (*led by the Guard.*)

What will ye with a poor old man?

ALONZO; (*to Juan.*)

Ah! this old man, Velasques!—this wretched old man!

TELASKO.

Give me back my daughter! restore to me my Cora!

XAIRA.

Away with them all!

TELASKO, (*as they lead him off.*)

Give me back my daughter! oh! give me back my Cora!

ACT IV.

ACT IV.

(*A desert place without the walls of the Temple. Four Priests are digging a grave: while they are singing the first strophe, Rolla appears and advances towards them.*)

Chorus of PRIESTS, (solemn and slow.)

“ **H**ASTEN! ye servants of heaven!
Haste! that our sins be forgiven,
When she shall perish,
Heaven our order shall cherish.”

ROLLA, (starting.)

Ha! what can this mean? what?

Chorus of PRIESTS.

“ Vengeance to God is a duty:
Nor, till her criminal beauty,
The worms shall nourish,
Shall Peru flourish.”

ROLLA.

Her criminal beauty! whose? speak! answer!

III. PRIEST.

Away from this place, 'tis cursed on Cora's account.

ROLLA.

Be cursed yourself, confounded prattler! what are you
doing here? what means this grave? speak!

Chorus

Chorus of PRIESTS.

Now, Brothers, we've done our commission,
Cora, prepare for thy doom,
Thy tortures avert our perdition,
Languishing fad in the tomb.

ROLLA.

Another thunderbolt leveled at me! (*The Priests collect their tools and are going*) speak! for mercy's sake, speak! tell me, 'tis Rolla who intreats you!—'tis the first request he ever made you. What has happened? what means this grave, and your raven song? (*the Priests are going: Rolla stamping with his feet*) Stop,—answer me or I'll use force!

(*Exeunt Priests, Rolla following them, meets Diego, who enters, sobbing.*)

R L L A.

Ha! you!—I know you; you were present.—What has happened since your master left me? speak! speak!

DIEGO.

I'm in a cold sweat; my poor unhappy master,—alas! he languishes in chains.

ROLLA, (*impatiently.*)

And Cora? Cora?

DIEGO.

Probably shares his fate. Don Juan will know the whole; he was there, and stayed.

ROLLA.

Don Juan! I thank you for naming him. Away! quick, fetch him here this instant! here I will wait for him. Here! quick I say! the moments are precious! (*Exit Diego*) How I burn to know the whole, and fear I shall know too much! how horror takes away my breath! where shall I find my uncle?

(*Rolla is going and runs against the High-Priest.*)

ROLLA.

Ah! here he is—yes or no?—is it true or false?

HIGH-

HIGH-PRIEST.

Your words I understand less than your wild looks.
(*Jigbing*) Too true!

ROLLA, (*pointing to the grave.*)

And here?

HIGH-PRIEST.

(*Turning away his face to conceal his emotion.*)

Alas!

ROLLA.

Then shudder, earth! and swallow up thy surface! groan, ye surrounding mountains, and drown these vallies in a stream of fire! let all things perish; no herb grow in future;—let nature struggle with convulsions! and oh! ye ministers of terror, thunders roar! and howl ye tempests! let my voice excite your fury! my arm shall murder quicker than your flashes.

HIGH-PRIEST.

For the Gods' sake, Rolla—

ROLLA, (*after a pause.*)

No,—she will not die! sooner shall the Temple become a desert, and the eternal lamp go out. Believe me, uncle, she will not die,—you may say her grave is ready—ha! ha! ha! her grave may be ready, but Rolla is still alive.

HIGH-PRIEST.

You grow terrible!

ROLLA.

First Rolla's grave! you must first see him extended on the cold earth;—every muscle stiff;—every limb motionless. And then examine well, whether he be really dead; for mind this,—long as a spark of life is in me, long as I can raise this arm—who dares touch Cora?—I would murder the Priests, and you, and the King, and whoever steps in my way.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Madman! proceed not to blasphemy, nor oppose the Gods.

L

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

The Gods! oh no!—the Gods think as I think. Their lightening is in my hand; their shield before my breast.—Short-sighted mortals! love is the brightest, warmest beam of our God. It brings to perfection the rose-bud, and the heart of man. Even Cora, that master-piece of nature, would have been imperfect without it. Woe to him! who in some dull corner sits like an oyster, and shuts out this beam! And a man without love, what is he? a lamp without a light—an eye without the power of sight.—But here am I talking what you cannot understand.

HIGH-PRIEST.

You wrong me Rolla.

ROLLA.

Wrong you! what, able to comprehend the heavenly, godly feel of love, and from your mouth Cora's condemnation?

HIGH-PRIEST.

From my mouth!

ROLLA.

Not from your heart then?

HIGH-PRIEST.

No;—never from my heart.

ROLLA.

Oh! then, come to my arms, I wish you joy! you are not yet divested of humanity,—But why so cold, so inactive? save her!

HIGH-PRIEST.

I cannot.

ROLLA.

Courage, my dear uncle, courage! your grey locks, your soft eloquence, my sword and God's assistance,—without fail, we save her!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Ah! young man, your zeal makes you blind to the steep rocks that lie in our way.

ROLLA.

ROLLA

I feel force in me to surmount them.

HIGH-PRIEST.

The superstitious multitude, the customs of a century—

ROLLA.

Nature is older,

HIGH-PRIEST.

But not mightier.

ROLLA.

What subterfuges!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Ah! with the handful of years, that still remain to me, could I purchase Cora's life, with what cheerfulness would I descend into the grave?

ROLLA,

Mere words!

HIGH-PRIEST.

And these tears?—

ROLLA.

Are feigned.—Talk not, but act.

HIGH-PRIEST.

What can I do for her?

ROLLA, (*with hands uplifted towards Heaven.*)

Then thou must save her, my father! suffer not the ruin of the most perfect object, on which thy rays can fall. Save her, in spite of these hard hearted Priests!—But what could I expect from one of your order? no heart ever beat beneath such a robe. Ye have only a relish for empty absurd customs. Ye are dissemblers in the sight of your God, and blood-thirsty as tygers!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Ah! Rolla! Rolla! you may repent of this treatment of me.

ROLLA.

Your fathers and mothers took pains to teach you, to

L 2

pluck

pluck up every flower that grew around you ; to wring the neck of every bird that fell into your hands ; and he who did this most expertly, was destined to become High-Priest.

HIGH-PRIEST.

This must I hear from you, Rolla ?

ROLLA.

All the wishes of their hearts are limited to their own well-fattened selves ! beauty is to them a blunt arrow, and love the height of absurdity. At the sufferings of their brothers, they shrug up their shoulders. Of its own accord, the tear of pity never rose into their eyes ; they must pump it up. The destruction of the world were indifferent to them, provided they could live, and feed, and be at their ease !

HIGH-PRIEST.

Young man, you unseal my mouth, I'll speak and shame you !

ROLLA.

Speak then, speak ! words you have at command, and sometimes you want even them.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Learn silence then, when old age speaks, and if you will not respect that, respect at least my misfortunes.—That I became a Priest, was it my own free choice ? Is not the King's nearest relation born High-Priest ? had you known me fifty years ago, I was then a vigorous youth, more desirous of wielding a sword, than the consecrated knife. Is it my fault that the caprice of fortune placed me at the Altar of the Sun, to slay doves, to prophecy from the entrails of lambs, or to explain dreams ?

ROLLA, (*cold and forced in his manner.*)

If I was too severe, forgive me : I scarce know myself for grief and rage.

HIGH-PRIEST.

This dignity, with which you reproach me, how oft have I wished to cast it aside as a tight garment, for it has been
the

the source of all my sufferings these forty years past. Indeed, young man, I cannot support that frosty look, the cold contempt of your forehead. You, the only person to whom my heart is attached, whose love I desire.—Hear my dismal history,—it has so much resemblance with your own. My woes, also, are those of the heart; my sufferings, the sufferings of hopeless love—I also formerly loved a Virgin of the Sun!

ROLLA, (*astonished.*)

What!

HIGH-PRIEST.

To me, as the High-Priest, the doors of the palace of the Sun stood always open; and my eye dwelt with pleasure on this grass-plot, where every day some new flower made its appearance. This was a long time a mere amusement; my heart remained perfectly uninterested; till at last, Zulma shone forth among her sisters, the image of the God she served. I saw her frequently, and with satisfaction; but why, I knew not. I cast a look into my heart, and shuddered. She probably did the same, for she began to avoid me, tho' I plainly saw it pained her. I wished to second the efforts of her virtue; I also avoided her. Then tortured by love and despair, we crept about month after month in a melancholy silence: our cheeks grew pale; grief dwelt in our hollow dim eyes. Her delicate frame suffered; she fell sick, struggled with death, and I—you are moved?

ROLLA,

(*With averted countenance offering him his hand.*)

Oh! I wronged you; I am ashamed of myself. Continue uncle.—She died then?

HIGH-PRIEST.

I hastened to her assistance; night and day I clambered up the steepest rocks, searched the woods and caverns for salutary herbs; called together the most celebrated botanists among the Priesthood,—and Zulma was saved. Thankful she sunk into my arms,
and

and without uttering a word, our souls conversed ; we both wept.
—See ! I am grown old, and how it affects me still !

ROLLA, (*embracing him.*)

Good, dearest, best uncle !

HIGH-PRIEST.

Hear the end of my history.—the smothered fire of love, broke out in a wild flame, and triumphed over reason and duty. We forgot ourselves,—Zulma became a mother, —and brought forth —you !

Rolla, (*retreats a step trembling, and regards the High-Priest, with a wild stare.*)

The HIGH-PRIEST, (*opens his arms.*)

You are my son !

ROLLA, (*with great emotion.*)

Old man ! you are mocking me.

HIGH-PRIEST.

You are my son !

ROLLA.

(*Casts himself without speaking into his arms—a pause :—suddenly tearing himself from his embrace—hastily :*)

Is my mother living ?

HIGH-PRIEST.

She looks down upon us from Heaven.

Rolla, (*lets fall his head and arms, and despondently fixes his wet eye on the ground.*)

HIGH-PRIEST.

Feel now, how a father's heart must have bled, at your bitter reproaches. Behold the source of my attachment to you : Why I always kept you in my sight ; why I intruded upon you, and often bore your ill treatment. Conceive now, my grief, my anxiety, when you marched against the enemy ;—my joy when you returned victorious.

ROLLA, (*pressing him to his heart.*)

So then, some one has been interested about me !—a Father
—Oh ! there is something so new in the name.—The feel so
new

new to me. Often when at the head of the army, I received your priestly benediction, and felt your hand, how it trembled on my head—Oh! had I known why it trembled—known that it was the blessing of a father—my Father! why conceal yourself from a heart like mine, so long destitute of every joy?

HIGH-PRIEST.

Your impetuosity! what reliance could I place in it?

ROLLA.

But—every thing seems so obscure to me; tear away this veil from my eyes.

HIGH-PRIEST.

What to every one else was, and always will be, impossible, was not so to me, being High-Priest. The history of your mother remained a secret: I sent you, a new-born infant, to the borders of the empire, among the people of Ibara, where my brother was governor. You were educated as his son, and were a mere boy when he died. His death gave me a pretext for bringing you away from that rough nation, to be under the care of your relatives at court. As far as I could, without raising suspicions, I managed your education. Your mother had retired a year before to the place of rest. I have hung down my grey head, and dragged on a miserable existence ever since.

ROLLA.

Miserable!—And you had a son?—till this hour, I always thought myself so too: but reproach me as a worthless wretch, if I ever murmur in future, for I have found a father! I am reconciled to the world. You and I, perfectly happy we shall never be; but a tolerable, even a comfortable existence, I may venture to promise you. Listen then to the bright dream of my fancy. Cora and Alonzo shall fly: we will accompany them. I will conduct you far from here, to a friend, who on my account, will become a friend to you all. There will we live, tranquil and content, one day after another

another, chearful and devoid of care;—and if now and then Cora's caresses and Alonzo's happiness should pain my heart, that I should no longer be able to support the sight, then I will beckon to you; we will leave them alone; we will sit down before our hut, and you shall repeat to me my mother's history.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Consider only, Rolla! how impracticable is this flight. They are both in chains, guarded by a thousand eyes: in a few hours the assembled Priests will pronounce her sentence. Ah! deceive not yourself—Cora is inevitably lost!

ROLLA.

No father! no;—you must save her; indeed you must: are you not High-Priest, the first of her judges?

HIGH-PRIEST.

What can my voice against an enraged multitude? I already hear the furious Xaira's rancour. Roar to the Tempests 'till you are hoarse, you will not prevent it from tearing up the young plant by the roots.

ROLLA.

Then at least, you will have done your duty; and leave the rest to God, and to my sword. Consider, father! should the murdered Cora meet my mother above, and say, "I am a Virgin of the Sun; who, for having loved, was condemned to death by the High-Priest and his tribe."—

HIGH-PRIEST.

Why torture me thus, my Son? I will do with pleasure my very utmost—I will harangue, intreat, try every means, exert the confined influence of an old man. Alas! the hour of her trial approaches.

ROLLA.

Then, hasten! fulfil your promise! do your best! my life depends on Cora's! should your exertions fail, then you shall find that I have not been idle—go!

HIGH-PRIEST,

HIGH-PRIEST,

(Offering him his band, and with an expression of deep melancholy.)

May we meet again more happy ! Farewell ! (Exit.)

ROLLA, (alone :—after a pause.)

You little know what is brooding here, (laying his band on his heart) my good old man ! in your eloquence, I have little confidence.—To arms ! to arms !—such arguments alone are irresistible. But where is Valasques loitering ? I must give him my hand, and infect him with my rage. Yes ! I will rescue her ;—I will rescue her ! My mother was a Virgin of the Sun—I dare not utter her name. Cora's rescue will appease her ghost. Thanks, ye Gods ! how wisely have you guided the reins of fate. Your fault it will not be, if Rolla remain poor in heroic deeds. Cora's danger ! my mother a victim too ! he who unruffled could bear these thoughts, his heart must be as cold and as insensible as the snows that rest on the summit of Cordilleras.

Enter Don Juan.

ROLLA.

Welcome !—I am waiting for you ; have need of you.

JUAN.

I am here.

ROLLA.

Have you courage to risk your life for your friend ?

JUAN.

If to any purpose, why not ?

ROLLA.

Give me your hand.

JUAN.

There !

ROLLA.

Cora and Alonzo are undone !

JUAN.

I fear so.

M

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

We will rescue them!

JUAN.

If we can!

ROLLA.

One bold stroke! let us not hesitate at any thing—

JUAN.

Less than a crime.

ROLLA, (*disconcerted*.)

A crime! fie! you quite damp my hopes. Yes, I mean a sort of crime.

JUAN.

Then look for some other instrument.

ROLLA.

Oh what delicacy! tell me then, which is the greatest crime, to establish or abolish an inhuman law?

JUAN.

To abolish one were a virtue!

ROLLA.

Which we will exercise.

JUAN.

We! by what authority? the King alone is authorised to do it.

ROLLA.

We'll advise the King.

JUAN.

We will so.

ROLLA.

At the head of our troops.

JUAN.

Such advice were rebellion.

ROLLA.

What signifies a name, if the consequences are good?

JUAN.

By no means. Ataliba has received me with hospitality:—he is my benefactor.

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

But your friend's life is in danger!

JUAN.

I will not commit a crime, even to save him.

ROLLA.

But if I promise you, that neither of the King, nor of any of his servants, shall a hair of the head be touched; that we will conquer only thro' terror.—You know I was commander of the troops; they all love me, for I have often led them on to victory, and I ever treated the lowest among them as a brother. To you also, the King has entrusted a gallant band: one sign from us, and every warrior flies to our standard. We demand nothing for ourselves; the throne is sacred to us: the life and property of every individual remains untouched: freedom is all we claim: freedom for Cora and Alonzo!

JUAN.

Noble Rolla! your love blinds you: look into your heart, and, for the first time in your life, you will detect yourself in an unjustifiable design.

ROLLA.

I have no ears for your reasoning. Virtue is mere children's play, when the passions are not engaged.

JUAN.

Well then! the greater the difficulty, the greater the triumph.

ROLLA.

No! no! no! I will feel nothing but Cora's danger; hear nothing but Cora's voice.—Look yonder is Cora's grave!—cold, insensible man! 'tis Cora's grave!—but what is Cora to you?—*(he seizes Juan's hand)* Come! come away to the scaffold prepared for your friend. If there, also, your heart will allow you to reason; if there, also, my despair, my rage fail to animate you;—there will I leave you, and seek my mother's grave: and at the first sight of that spot, when

I see the long grass waving in the wind, every one of your empty scruples shall vanish from my soul. Come away! away!
(Exit, drawing Juan away with him.)

SCENE.—*The Vestibule of the Temple.*

Xaira and other Priests discovered conversing.

XAIRA.

He loiters indeed!

1st. PRIEST.

It grows late.

2nd. PRIEST.

The time slips away.

3rd. PRIEST.

Mid-day is long past.

XAIRA.

What can the King require of him?

1st. PRIEST.

The messenger could not say.

2nd. PRIEST.

Only that he wished to speak with him, before the sentence was pronounced on Cora.

XAIRA.

Strange indeed!

1st. PRIEST.

The messenger was in haste.

XAIRA.

So! a conversation about the sentence, without doubt? Perhaps too, a fellow-feeling for the criminals.—Ah! my friends, I fear this Inca is backwards, to revenge the Gods. This very morning, how reluctantly he ordered the young Zorai, to be chained: with what compassion he looked upon the impious stranger; nay even condescended to speak to him—Oh! his father was a different man!

1st. PRIEST.

1st. PRIEST.

That he was.

2nd. PRIEST.

He never missed a sacrifice:

3rd. PRIEST.

Trembled always as he entered the Temple:

XAIRA.

And honoured our wisdom.

1st. PRIEST.

Our near communications with the Gods;—

XAIRA.

Cast down his eyes with reverence, where his Son ventures to laugh.—But whose fault is all this? His instructors;—his preceptor's: in one word, it is the High-Priest's. I will not talk; 'tis neither time nor place; but I know his principles.—Beware! I say beware—

1st. PRIEST, (*interrupting him.*)

He comes.

XAIRA.

At last.

*Enter the High-Priest.*XAIRA, (*advancing to meet him.*)

We have been waiting for you, with impatience.

HIGH-PRIEST.

The Inca sent for me.

XAIRA.

Must your conversation remain a secret to us?

HIGH-PRIEST.

By no means. The King's pleasure requires from the judges of Cora and Alonzo, a strict examination, whether they both are equally criminal; or whether one has not blindly misled and corrupted the other:

XAIRA, (*impatiently interrupting him.*)

Well! and suppose it should prove so?

HIGH-PRIEST.

HIGH-PRIEST.

If so, the seducer only shall be punished; the seduced pardoned.

XAIRA.

May I believe my ears! A King has said this; and a High-Priest ventures to repeat it after him!

HIGH-PRIEST.

And why not?

XAIRA.

The transgressors of the law shall both die! Such is the will of God.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Have you heard him pronounce it? or was it not the first Inca, through whose mouth he spake.

XAIRA.

It is the same thing.

HIGH-PRIEST.

You are right. The Inca is God's image here on earth: but the present Inca equally so with the first: and that severity which the barbarity of that age required from his ancestor, may not the descendant mitigate?

XAIRA, (*ironically*)

Why not acquit them at once?

HIGH-PRIEST.

I own to you, I found him very much inclined to do so; but the tranquillity of the state requires an example.

XAIRA.

One only? and which? what earthly wisdom can determine which is the criminal? will they not both plead their innocence? will not each throw the fault on the other?

HIGH-PRIEST,

Very possibly.

XAIRA.

And what then must be our sentence?

HIGH-PRIEST.

HIGH-PRIESTESS.

We will consider that afterwards. At present, our duty is to obey the King. Conduct Cora and Alonzo hither.

(Exit a Priest.)

XAIRA.

No!—I will not stain my conscience, not even to oblige the Inca. Both deserve death. Both! seduced or not, it is the same. This I will tell the Inca to his face, this I will whisper in the ears of the people, and if Ataliba has no awe for the Gods, let him tremble at his own subjects.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Conscience is his law, and yours also. Enough! take your places.

(The High-Priest stands in the middle; Xaira at his right; the other Priests place themselves on both sides.—Cora and Alonzo are led in from different sides of the Theatre. They are in chains. Cora is stript of the Image of the Sun she wore on her breast, and of the flame-coloured girdle.)

CORA.

(affectionately and fearlessly, as she perceives Alonzo.)
My Alonzo!

ALONZO.

Good God! are you also in chains?

CORA.

Do not grieve—you and I—we will die together.

ALONZO.

And I!—I am your murderer!

XAIRA.

Silence!

HIGH-PRIEST, (with a solemn, tho' mild manner.)

We the servants of God, the executors of his holy will, are assembled here, to judge Cora the daughter of Telasco, and Alonzo, the stranger. Oh Sun! let thy beams descend into our hearts;—thou! who with a glance overlookest the world! thou hast submitted to our sentence, life and death;
honor

honor and infamy! search the recesses of our hearts, oh Father! that neither interest, partiality, or revenge, misguide us. (*He kneels with the other Priests.*) We swear to judge with justice, oh Sun! according to thy law which Manco Capac has revealed to us! If the profanation of thy Temple permit us to exercise mercy, we swear to judge with mercy! To-day or to-morrow summons thy servants before thy throne, and we swear to render an account of this solemn hour!

All the PRIESTS.

We swear!

(*They rise.*)

HIGH-PRIEST.

Have you, Cora! broken your vow?

CORA.

I have!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Know you this youth?

CORA.

He is my husband.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Alonzo, know you this woman?

ALONZO.

She is my wife.

XATRA.

You have both forfeited your lives.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Before judgement be pronounced, I am charged with the delightful commission, in the King's name, to pardon the one who was the victim of seduction.—Ataliba, the son of the Sun, under whose dominion Quito flourishes, requires from both of you, the free and sincere confession, which of you was the seducer;—which the seduced?

CORA. I seduced him!

ALONZO. I seduced her!

} both at once.

CORA.

CORA, (*hastily and anxiously interrupting him.*)

Do not believe him!—it is false!

ALONZO, (*in the same manner.*)

Do not believe her!—she deceives you!

CORA.

I! I alone am guilty!

ALONZO.

Me! me only condemn to death!

CORA.

Pardon him! acquit him! he is innocent!

ALONZO.

Pity the weakness of her sex! let the seducer suffer!

CORA.

No! no! no!

(*High-Priest turning away to conceal his emotion.*)

XAIRA.

Silence! amid this confusion, who can discover the truth? give your evidence separately.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Be silent, Alonzo!—Cora, speak!

CORA.

The first time I saw Alonzo in the Temple, I constantly fixed my eyes where he stood; and used every method to approach him. As often as I passed him, I threw back my veil, and with my fiery glances, summoned his heart.—

ALONZO, (*interrupting her.*)

'Tis false! every word false! you fixed your eyes on the ground.

XAIRA.

Silence, stranger! 'till it is your turn to speak.

CORA.

My glowing cheeks, my love-avowing look emboldened him. He sprang over our holy walls, but struck with imme-

N

diate

diate horror, he would have retreated without having seen me: I discovered him at a distance; duty bade me fly: to approach him was forbidden me;—it was never forbidden him to approach me. But I fled not, I called, I beckoned; he stood hesitating and irresolute: I hastened to him, cast my arms about his neck, and pressed my lips to his lips. He would have fled:—I held him:—he never would have returned:—I entreated him. He painted our danger; I encouraged him: Me, me alone let your justice condemn! —I seduced him!

ALONZO,

Nature contradicts you: modesty is the sister of beauty. Man acknowledges love,—woman returns it. Was it not I who first in the Temple cast on you my immodest glance? whose wanton look dyed your cheeks with blushes, and undermined your peace and tranquillity for ever? who, in defiance of the Gods and man, scaled your holy walls? Had you invited me? had you any knowledge of my infamous plans? did not you shudder and retreat when you saw me? did I not lay at your feet, and hold you fast by the hem of your garment? but why need I declare this? Judges, you know mankind. It is sufficiently palpable, that I—I alone was the seducer.

CORA.

Spare him! he saved the Inca's life! and he is innocent.

ALONZO.

She knows not what she says, I am guilty.

CORA.

If you require a farther proof that I alone am guilty, let this convince you;—he is sorry for his fault, I am not; I repent not, I glory in my crime; and here in the presence of the Gods—before you all, (*she runs toward Alonzo*) I embrace him as my husband;—mark the horror he expresses,
how

how he tries to disengage himself, while I—I cleave to him.

ALONZO.

Cora! what are you doing?

CORA,

Hear, how he reproves me! how he warns me! he did so always; but I would not hear,—would not listen to him—I drew him with me into this gulph.

XAIRA.

Shameless indeed! tear her from him!

CORA,

(*Resumes her former place, tranquil and resigned.*)

Now pronounce judgment.

XAIRA.

I shudder.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Conduct back the prisoners.

ALONZO, (*extending his arms towards Cora.*)

Farewel!

CORA, (*smiling.*)

Soon shall we meet again.

XAIRA.

In the hour of death.

CORA.

So much the better; where this life ends, a better life begins.

XAIRA.

Away with them.

ALONZO.

Farewel!

CORA, (*with a melancholy smile.*)

With a tear we separate here: with a smile we meet yonder.

N 2

XAIRA.

XAIRA.

Have we not heard enough? my Sentence is DEATH
—The DEATH of BOTH!

HIGH-PRIEST, (*melancholy.*)

Follow me into the inner Temple, where, having finished
our sacrifice, we will judge Cora and Alonzo: but forget
not, God will one day be our judge.

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT V.

ACT V.

(Inside of the Temple; the image of the Sun upon an altar, raised upon steps in the back ground; where some of the Priests are employed in sacrificing and burning incense.)

The HIGH-PRIEST, and XAIRA.

HIGH-PRIEST, *(continuing.)*

ONE word more, Xaira! before we, by a rash sentence profane the holy name we bear. Are we not the servants of divine mercy?

XAIRA.

And of divine vengeance too. Enough! 'tis against your duty to extort my sentence, and against mine to listen longer.

HIGH-PRIEST, *(with warmth.)*

Then, their blood come upon your conscience.

XAIRA, *(coldly.)*

Be it so! upon my conscience then.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Approach ye Priests, *(The Priests assemble round him) (aside)* O! I already read their sentence in their looks! *(endeavours to be composed, after a pause.)* Ye know the offenders and the offence.—Pronounce sentence.—

XAIRA, *(to the High-Priest.)*

What are the words of the law? *(the High-Priest makes no answer.)* I ask you what are the words of the law?

HIGH-PRIEST, *(after an inward struggle.)*

Death!

XAIRA.

XAIRA, (*loud and solemn.*)

The law pronounces death on Cora and Alonzo.

PRIESTS.

Death !

HIGH-PRIEST, (*after a pause, resolute.*)

I protest against this bloody sentence,—my sentence is mercy : for I feel myself mortal as well as they ; search your own bosoms, examine your hearts, and if that but whispers mercy, oh ! listen to its suggestions, and loudly join your voices with me, mercy ! mercy !

XAIRA, (*coldly and unmoved.*)

The words of the law are death.

ALL.

Death.

HIGH-PRIEST.

This is your work then : Thou seest me : Thou unknown God—my hand is unstained by any drop of this blood ! Lead here the unhappy victims of your blind zeal. (*Exeunt two Priests from different sides of the stage.*) Ye others place upon the altar, the sword and a branch freshly broken from the Palm tree. You, Xaira, follow me to the King.

(*Exit with Xaira.*)

Priests remain employed at the altar, till the entrance of the High-Priest, and the Inca.

Enter Alonzo.

ALONZO.

I shudder ! 'Tis only the Temple of an Idol :—but God dwells every where.—Even here, where under the image of the Sun, the creature worships the Creator :—and I—I have profaned the Temple ; I am the murderer of Cora ! the murderer of a venerable old man, who never injured me !—the destroyer of the peace of a generous people, who received me with open arms ! —Oh ! earth, swallow up this monster ! on my grave let no grass grow ;—never may the dew of heaven moisten it ;—

no

no wanderer there shall rest; no infant sport there! (Cora enters.) Ah Cora! what joy I once felt at seeing you,—but now, what horror!

CORA.

How, Alonzo? you speak not as you think, have I not often heard you say, "If I cannot live with Cora, I will die with her"?—Cora thought so too, and thinks so still: if I cannot live with you, I will die with you, to live with you yonder.

ALONZO.

Yours is the tranquillity of innocence: you knew not what you did;—but I—an evil conscience accompanies me into the grave.

CORA.

How so? what evil have we done? we loved; and could we do otherwise? if you could resist, I could not:—whose fault was it then? that of hazard, or of the divinity which brought us together? no; every thing goes well: I am contented with my destiny. And these people too, are kind;—they will unite us to each other.—As a Virgin of the Sun, my vows forbid me to marry; but death, death unites us.—Courage! Alonzo, courage! yonder is the abode of love and liberty.

ALONZO.

Dear creature! with your innocent soul, you can look with tranquillity on the past and future; but I——

CORA.

But if I convince you, that you have less reason to be uneasy about the future than Cora has?—your mother is far, far from here, and when she no longer receives any intelligence of you, she will imagine that either shipwreck or sickness has snatched you from the world; she will console herself; and the active imagination of a mother will figure to her every thing good or great, that you have or might have done: but I—I have a father, far from hence 'tis true,
in

in a remote province; but he must soon learn for what reasons, and in what manner his daughter has died.—'Tis this idea imbitters Cora's death.—The old man loves me so;—he is such a good old man;—were he here, 'twould break his heart.—

ALONZO, (*aside.*)

Ah heavens! she knows not—

CORA.

For this last hour I have been on my knees, and have been praying with fervor for my father; that a gentle death may remove him from the world, ere Cora's destiny reaches his ear:—suddenly such cheerfulness brightened my soul as if a morning dawned;—I hope my prayer was heard.

Enter Telasco, supported by Zorai, who is in chains.

CORA, (*bricks and trembles.*)

Ah! I was heard!—that ghost!—it is the spirit of my father!—but how he frowns!—(*hiding her face*) his look is terrible.—Alonzo! Alonzo! wake me from this dream!—

ALONZO.

Would to God it were only your father's shade; 'tis he himself.—Oh this bitter hour!

CORA, (*sobbing, and turning to Telasco.*)

My father!

TELASKO, (*to Zorai.*)

Why must I be led hither? exactly to this place? Have I so long served my country, and does it owe me no indulgence? go, ask the Priests if it must be so, if I must stay here with her? go! go!—meanwhile I will support myself against this pillar.

CORA, (*approaching Telasco.*)

My father!

TELASKO.

Save me! Zorai, save me!

ZORAI, (*repulsing her.*)

Away! serpent.—Spare at least the last moments of the poor old man.

TELASKO.

Telasko turns away his face.

CORA,

(Falling on her knees, and raising her hands in a supplicating posture.)

Brother!

ZORAI.

I your brother?—yes, these chains remind me that I am your brother.

CORA.

Father!

TELASKO, *(still turning away his face.)*

Who calls?—I know not thy voice.

CORA.

Brother!—father!—ah! this is indeed worse than the anguish of death. *(Wringing her bands.)*

TELASKO.

Ah Zorai, my heart breaks,—'tis the voice of her mother, *(casting a look on her)* and her mother's form too.—Cora! Cora!—I had grown grey with honor, and you cover my grave with infamy.—If your mother knew this—how happy is she in not having lived to see this day.—Away from me,—expect no pity from me;—have I deserved this from you? I never forced you to consecrate your youth to the service of the Sun:—I said to you—ah! how often, "Daughter, Daughter, reflect what you are doing;—there are joys which you know not of, but which perhaps on some future day you may conceive: but merely to think of them then, will be a crime, tho' the want of them may render you miserable." The last evening before the Gods heard your irrevokable vow; on the last evening I begged you, and God knows how I felt at the time, I begged you, "Daughter! my dear daughter! it is not yet too late to retract." The future hovered before my soul, dark and dismal as the sea on a cloudy night. You also wept;—your heart was oppressed;—but why, you knew not;—'twas your good angel warned

warned you.—Yet you persisted in your enthusiasm, and dreamt of a communication with the Gods.—Now, here we are, I, an old man with my grey hair: the honor of my family ruined;—this youth, full of energy and patriotism, tho' innocent, entangled in your fate. Both murdered by the hand of a daughter, of a sister,—and infamy accompanies us to the grave. Ah! that I should have lived to see this day!—happy, happy was your mother, that she died before this morning dawned!

Cora, overpowered by these reproaches, sinks with a faint sigh to the ground.

TELASKO, *(with an emotion of tenderness.)*

Ah Zorai! help her!—

ZORAI,

(Raises her from the ground, Alonzo also hastens to her assistance, Zorai repulsing him.)

Away! thou wretch! thou murderer of virtue!—Oh! how little these heroes seem when we examine them closely! at a distance, how I admired, how I revered this man. My young heart beat high with rapture, while I listened to his praises: how often have I wished myself in his place? fool that I was! his deeds were the effect of chance: he is a weak mortal like ourselves.—Look here, and feast on the sight; it is your work!—Ha! thank these chains that I take not bloody vengeance on you, in the very Temple of our God.

ALONZO:

Did you know how my heart is torn by anguish, how inexpressibly I suffer, you would pity me.—

TELASKO:

Spare him, my son! he is more wretched than we are. We possess a treasure none can deprive us of,—a good conscience. He is poorer than we; he has lost every thing.

CORA.

CORA,

Ah father! let me not die in despair! in the hour of death can you refuse me your blessing? (*She falls at his feet*) I will embrace your knees; my anguish, my despair, must at length move you! have pity on me! bless me, forgive me, my father!—Forgive me! oh, forgive me, my brother!

Telasko and Zorai are moved.

CORA.

See, I humble myself in the dust—I suffer inexpressible pain—have mercy on me!—I cannot longer support it.—

TELASKO, (*very much affected.*)

Son! son! let us not add bitterness to her last hours. We owe pity and forgiveness to the wretched. Lift her up into my arms. (*Zorai obeys.*)

TELASKO, (*pressing her to his bosom.*)

Die in peace!—I forgive thee!

CORA, (*with a faint voice.*)

My brother!—

TELASKO.

He also forgives thee!—come, come Zorai, no rancour: pardon a penitent! call her again your sister!—

ZORAI, (*embracing Cora.*)

Unhappy—sister!

CORA, (*in a very feeble tone of voice.*)

Thanks be to the Gods!—the bitterness of death is past.

ALONZO.

Your hearts are softened;—may Alonzo now venture—to implore your pity:—you called me weak, Zorai! I am indeed weak,—but not wicked!—There is such a natural tie among the wretched:—Let us die reconciled!

TELASKO.

Stranger, my heart harbours no rancour against you. How can I quit the world more gloriously, than in forgiving those who have offended me?—Are your parents still living?

O 2

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Only an aged mother.

TELASKO.

Now for that aged mother's sake—come here, and in her stead, let me bless thee! (*folding him in his arms.*)

ALONZO.

Oh! my heart, is relieved from a heavy burden. And you, too, Zorai!—(*offering him his band.*)

ZORAI, (*refusing it.*)

Leave me!—I admire my father!—but to follow his example, is impossible to me.

ALONZO.

Give peace to my departing soul!

ZORAI.

I cannot. Shall I stoop to play the hypocrite, and feign a reconciliation, which I do not feel? I hate thee!—Leave me! I will try to overcome this bitter feeling, which speaks against thee; and if I succeed, I will offer thee my hand, as we go to execution: Thou wilt understand my meaning.

ALONZO.

For even this promise, I am grateful to you: it is much more than I have deserved.

(*Cora, during this last dialogue, has been leaning against a pillar, to recover herself.*)

(*Enter the High-Priest, Xaira, several other Priests. Immediately after, the King, and his attendants.*)

XAIRA.

The King is coming.

(*The Priests assemble on the steps of the altar. Cora, Telasko, and Zorai, remain in the fore-ground, on one side: Alonzo on the other.*)

ATALIBA.

(*Enters slowly and solemnly: he kneels before the image of the Sun, and remains some moments in a posture of devotion; a profound*

a profound silence.—He turns to Alonzo, and basily, and in a half-whisper,)

Save yourself Alonzo; plead, declare, that you are a stranger, and ignorant of our laws, and of our punishments. Plead the services you have rendered to the state, to myself, and to the nation. Speak whatever your situation may prompt you;—your judge is your friend. Make it only possible for me to save you, without drawing on myself the suspicion of partiality.

(Alonzo bows in silent gratitude.)

ATALIBA, *(to Telasco.)*

You, old man with your silver locks, are free. He who a thousand times devoted his life to the country, has devoted it to the Gods;—and it is sacred!

TELASKO.

Ah! Inca! how barbarous! after having stript the tree of all its branches, will you not hew down the old trunk?

ATALIBA, *(to Zorai.)*

And you, young man, are also free.

(A murmur of discontent among the Priests; the King remarks it; and raising his voice and fixing his eyes sternly upon them, he continues.)

For it is the will of my father, the Sun, that henceforth only the guilty should suffer. Console your old father, Zorai! comfort him and attend him 'till he departs from this world, and then come to me,—to your elder brother! *(Zorai attempts to cast himself at the Inca's feet; he prevents him, and turns towards Cora.)* For you, Cora? I can do nothing—

CORA, *(with the warmest gratitude.)*

Ah! you have done so much.

ATALIBA, *(with pity.)*

You stand immediately under the law; and even the King is subject to the law. *(He turns, ascends the steps of the altar, stops upon the highest steps and bows himself before the image of the Sun; then, turning towards the assembly.)* High-Priest, fulfil your office.

HIGH-

HIGH-PRIEST.

Excuse me Inca :—Spare my age, my infirmity ;—my grief ;—
 permit that, Xaira in my stead, may—

ATALIBA.

Be it so !

XAIRA, (*advancing with solemnity*)

First born son of the Sun ! A Virgin consecrated to our
 Gods, has broken her sacred vow.—Cora ! stand forward.
 A stranger on this coast is the accomplice of her crime.—
 Alonzo ! stand forward.—We the servants of an offended God,
 the Priests of a violated Temple, true to the ordinances of your
 ancestors, have pronounced sentence on both : and our sentence
 is death !

ATALIBA, (*after a pause.*)

Can you make any defence ? (*Cora and Alonzo are silent.*)
 I ask you, Cora and Alonzo, can you make any defence ?

CORA.

No.

ALONZO.

No.

ATALIBA, (*surprized.*)

What, Alonzo ! do you know nothing to plead in your
 defence ?

ALONZO.

Nothing.

ATALIBA.

Consider ; I allow you time for recollection. Consider,
 stranger !

ALONZO.

I deserve death, and suffer willingly.

ATALIBA, (*with great emotion.*)

Consider what you are doing.—A few moments only are
 allowed you !—In this case my countrymen, mercy is a duty,—
 for he is a stranger. He, as a boy, was not impressed with that
 holy awe for the Gods, which the lessons of our priests implant
 in

in the breasts of the Peruvians: he knew not,—he felt not,—he saw not with our eyes.—Once more, Alonzo! speak!—speak but a word; the Gods are just,—are gracious,—are merciful.

ALONZO.

I have deserved death.

ATALIBA, (*after a pause.*)

Is that your last word?

ALONZO.

My last.

ATALIBA,

(*Leans against the Altar, and conceals his face with his hand:—after a pause, recollecting himself.*)

Priests fulfil your office.

(*Two Priests slowly and solemnly approach the Altar, to which they ascend on each side of the King: one takes the sword, the other the palm branch which lies upon it; they descend in the same manner, and place themselves by Xaira.*)

XAIRA, (*presenting the sword to the King.*)

Son of the Sun! receive from my hand the emblem of justice.—(*presenting the palm branch*) Son of the Sun! receive from my hand the emblem of mercy! may the Gods direct your decision!

ATALIBA, (*kneeling.*)

God! thou knowest my heart; thou seest how it bleeds at this moment! never again let my duty fall so heavy on me!—ye spirits of my ancestors! let your wisdom hover round me;—and if I have fulfilled my duty, restore my tranquillity!

(*He rises. Cora and Alonzo, Telasco and Zorai, kneel with their heads bowed to the earth. Ataliba seems to struggle against his own feelings:—he raises the sword, and is about to speak, when suddenly a Courtier rushes in, trembling, and out of breath.*)

COURTIER.

COURTIER.

Excuse me, Inca, these unwelcome tidings. The flame of rebellion has burst forth: the people are furious in the streets; with cries of war the whole army is collecting; nothing is heard but the loud sounds of drums and horns, the clash of weapons, and the din of arms; a forest of lances is drawing near; nothing is to be distinguished but confusion and uproar; no answer to a thousand questions, only the name of Rolla! Rolla! rends the skies. The stranger Velasques was with his troop in the valley; I saw him running from one to the other, and from his gestures, I concluded that he was employing every art of entreaty and threatening to preserve them in their allegiance: but in vain! one after the other deserted him and joined Rolla.

(The whole assembly, except the King, betray marks of consternation and uneasiness.)

ATALIBA, *(firmly.)*

What can this mean?—*(to the Courtiers)* Can none of you tell? *(they are all silent)* *(turning to the Courtier)* Rolla, you say, at the head of the army?—'tis no rebellion. Rolla and rebellion! oh, no! you are mistaken. Did you see him yourself.

COURTIER.

At a distance only. The leaders had formed a circle round him. He spoke loud, and with the highest animation; his face glowed; the fire of his enthusiasm was communicated to those around him; with impetuous acclamations of applause they interrupted his speech; they brandished their swords over their heads, and shook their lances. The whole army was in full career advancing hither, when I ran forwards to forwarn you of it.

ATALIBA, *(without changing his countenance.)*

The mystery will soon be unfolded: *(looking around him)* I read fear on your countenances. Why this panic? he, who

who is the benefactor of his subjects, need surely never fear them.
Let them come!

A confused noise behind the scene; several voices on the stage, exclaim.

They come! they come! they are already here!

ROLLA.

(Rolla enters; he has a drawn sword in his right, and a javelin in his left hand; bow and quiver at his back; other leaders of the troops follow him.)

Follow me! follow me, my friends!

XAIRA, *(exclaiming aloud.)*

The Temple is profaned.

ROLLA.

Yes,—by your bloody sentence.

XAIRA.

Vengeance, ye Gods! *(a confused tumult.)*

ATALIBA, *(to Xaira.)*

Silence! *(makes a sign with his hand that he wishes to speak; instantly a general silence: to Rolla)* Who are you?

ROLLA.

Do you not know me?

ATALIBA.

I had once a commander who resembled you; he was called Rolla, and his character was noble.—But who are you?

ROLLA.

No derision, Inca! for the Gods' sake, no derision!—but you may be right, I am no longer Rolla—I am a stranger to myself: a storm drives me on; a stream carries me away; have pity on me! I honor you, Inca, I honor you and love you!

ATALIBA.

You love me?—I dreamt so once.—Rolla, I thought my relation; Rolla,—as long as I possess him, let the King of

P

Cusco,

Cusco threaten, and whole provinces rebel, his heroic courage is as a tree, under whose shadow I may tranquilly repose.

ROLLA.

But I entreat you—can that tree resist, if a whirlwind tear it up by the roots, and it should fall and crush you, as you repose under its shadow.

ATALIBA.

What whirlwind then impels you on? what are your desires? speak! and thank your former actions for this permission. I never yet rewarded your heroic deeds, as they deserved; I do it at this instant—I permit you to speak.

ROLLA

My defence is short; but thou wilt feel it, and it will impress thee, Inca, if thy divine origin has not effaced thy human feelings.—I love!—Talk not of my achievements. I have achieved nothing. Love did every thing, with my arm. Love employed all my thoughts;—love made me a hero. Cora's image was my companion on the field of battle: Cora's affection was the summit of my wishes;—my heaven within Cora's arms. If here, or there, undaunted I defied death, the thought of thee, Inca! or of my country, or of the illustrious race I am descended from, never inspired me:—no! 'twas the remembrance of Cora! 'twas the hope of her approbation, of her applause, To me thou owest nothing: every thing to my love for Cora: and let thy gratitude to-day repay the debt. See! I am become a man, but my pulses still beat with youthful ardour, and still the bright dreams of my youthful enthusiasm remain: my passion for Cora has grown with my growth: its fibres are interwoven with my existence, and thou canst not extirpate it, without destroying me.—Inca! be merciful! save her! on my knees I supplicate for her life. *(kneeling)* Since Cora called the forsaken Rolla her brother, he is become proud: but yet, kneeling he supplicates for his dear sister's life!

ATALIBA,

ATALIBA,

(*Endeavouring to the utmost to conceal his emotion and maintain his dignity.*)

Arise!

ROLLA.

Mercy! mercy!

ATALIBA.

Arise!—lay down your arms at my feet; dismiss the troops that attend you,—and patiently and submissively await the sentence of your King.

ROLLA.

Mercy!—uncle!—sister! assist me to entreat him—I am so little accustomed to petition:—I know not how to—

ATALIBA.

A petitioner in arms?—you mock your sovereign.

ROLLA, (*rising.*)

Mock you? oh no!—but you require impossibilities. Cora in chains, and Rolla without a sword!—oh no! by heavens—it is impossible!

ATALIBA.

I command you!—lay down your arms at my feet!—

ROLLA.

Pardon her, Inca! absolve her from this odious vow,—and my arms and life together are at your disposal.

ATALIBA.

Attempt not to make conditions!—lay down your arms!

ROLLA.

I cannot!—Come into my arms, Cora!—my breast shall be thy shield:—my sword shall hew thy chains asunder,

ATALIBA.

Rebel! do your pleasure, in defiance of the Gods;—but know, that Ataliba will never pronounce sentence, till kneeling and disarmed he sees you humbled at his feet. You shall not boast that you have extorted mercy from your King,—Ye people of Quito, hear the voice of your ruler;

hear it perhaps for the last time, for in this moment I lay down my sceptre, and my father may govern you! these seven years have I been your King! I stand here in the Temple, in the presence of my God. Let him who can accuse me of wilful injustice, now testify against me, and convict me! let him who I have sent away without redress, if I could redress him, now stand forward and accuse me! I have extended my dominion by conquest, and Kings have been my captives;—but these are trifles. When famine announced the vengeance of the Gods, my stores were lavished to relieve your necessities; I fed the hungry, I refreshed the sick. And many a night has sleep forsaken my couch when I reflected on your misery, and grieved that my power of relieving it was so limited. Ye people of Quito! I have not deserved this return!—seize him!—chain him!—or I lay down the sceptre for ever,

A confused murmur among the people.

ROLLA, (*turning to his followers.*)

Seize me! chain me! which among you will do it? *you* perhaps, my old fellow-soldier! with whom, when our provisions failed, I divided my last morsel.—Or *you*, perhaps, whose life I saved amid the slaughter of Tumibamba? or *you*, whose son I rescued when the enemy pressed on him, and would have hewn him to pieces?—which among you will seize me? which of you? speak!

HIGH-PRIEST, (*with melancholy.*)

Oh Rolla! son of my adoption! you bow me to the earth. Would you see my old age humbled at your feet?

ROLLA.

I honor you as a father!—but approach me not in this form. (*The High-Priest wishes to continue, Rolla advances towards him with a threatening air.*) Forbear! uncle;—the die is cast,—I must rescue Cora, or I will perish with her.

CORA,

CORA.

(*Advancing towards Rolla, and throwing her arms about his neck.*)

This tear thanks you for your love, my brother! receive this kiss from your sister. (*kissing him*) You are indeed a great man;—to-day I have learnt your value: but so great, so good a man, ought also to be obedient to the laws, and submissive to his Sovereign. Cora has committed a crime; and would you, to save her, be guilty of a fresh transgression? *that* also would fall upon my conscience; and my conscience is sufficiently burthened already. (*fondly and footingly*) No, Rolla! you will not do so!—attempt not to overrule that invisible power that guides my fate. Let me die! my father and my brother have forgiven me; Alonzo dies with me; I die content.—Our souls will hover around you, will delight in you, when we see you devoting your abilities to the service of your country and of your King.—Consent to survive me then; will you, my best, my dearest Rolla? if my entreaties move you, I shall quit the world with a good action; and for this too, I shall be indebted to you.—Oh yes! I see it: your brow becomes serene: a tear trembles in your eye.—Ah! suppress it not! it does not disgrace the warrior.—give me your sword—your javelin—(*She takes the sword and lance gently out of his hand*) Here stands the hero! and the tear that trembles on his cheek, has washed away the stain from his glory and his virtue! I thank you, Rolla! I am proud of your love.—And now, come,—come! at the feet of our good King, compleat the triumph of your virtue. (*She leads him with gentle force to the King: she kneels, and Rolla beside her*) I restore to you your hero; pardon him!—he deserves your pardon. (*She arises, and retires to her place.*) Now, Inca! pronounce our sentence.

Rolla,

Rolla remains kneeling before the King.

TELASKO, (*embracing Cora.*)

My daughter!—now in the presence of you all, I can without blushing, call her again my daughter!

ATALIBA,

Does Rolla submit to his King?

ROLLA.

I submit!

ATALIBA.

You have forfeited your life.

ROLLA.

I know it.

ATALIBA.

I pardon you.

ROLLA. (*with sudden joy.*)

And Cora?

ATALIBA.

I pardon you!

ROLLA, (*drooping his head again, despondently.*)

Ah!—

ATALIBA.

Arise!

ROLLA.

Kneeling let me hear Cora's sentence.—With hers, you pronounce mine.

ATALIBA.

Be it so! (*he resumes the sword and palm-branch, which, as the confusion began, he had replaced upon the Altar.*)

HIGH-PRIEST, (*suddenly casting himself at his feet.*)

Forgive them!

ATALIBA, (*descending to him, and raising him up graciously.*)

And you, also, my Father? has our God revealed his will to you?

HIGH-PRIEST.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Mercy!—such is the will of the Gods!—Our rude ancestors, wild and savage in their manners, could form no idea of divine benevolence. Surrounded by images of terror, their Gods were as gloomy as the forests they inhabited. All the ills, to which the naked savage is exposed, were thought the pastimes of a superior being. Fear, not gratitude, prompted their devotion; and the mother sacrificed her new born infant to the lion and the tyger. Manco Capac, abolished these absurdities: follow his example, Inca! and abolish this unnatural law. Can the Sun, the source of fertility and abundance, the Sun who is all goodness, can he consider love a crime; or punish with death, an obedience to the law of nature? must not every mother find favor in his sight? Oh Inca! render our religion perfect, by rendering it beneficent. Nothing can be displeasing to God, but what is hurtful to man. Hesitate not; do quickly what is good; and if you are not convinced, be moved by the intreaties of an old man;—who educated you;— who loved you as his own son:—who watched by the cradle, where you lay a slumbering infant. (*uncovering his head*) See, my grey hairs!—grown grey in your service!

ATALIBA.

Enough!—approach, Cora!—and you, Alonzo!

HIGH-PRIEST.

The Gods direct his great heart!

Cora and Alonzo, approach with trembling steps and kneel before the King.)

TELASKO, (*to Zorai.*)

Support me, my son!

(A general silence, and profound suspense.)

ATALIBA,

ATALIBA.

(After a pause, with the right hand, bends the sword against the ground till it breaks : with the left, gives the Palm-branch to Cora.)

The law be abolished!—Cora and Alonzo pardoned!

(Cora swoons. Alonzo casts himself on the ground beside her. Rolla starts up, and presses the King wildly to his heart. The High-Priest raises his hands, with gratitude to Heaven. Telasco leaning on Zorai, approaches his daughter with trembling steps. —The people cry repeatedly.)

Long live the Inca!

(The curtain drops.)

THE END.

